CHAPTER 6

THE SMALL FINDS

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INTRODUCTION

In an urban setting, assemblages of small finds made and used in southern Britain from the early/mid-second century to the late third century A.D. are rarely defined in terms of close date ranges; they are simply 'Roman'. The chief distinction between such assemblages and those of the early and late Roman periods quite simply lies in the absence of artefacts belonging to either the first or fourth century. Remarkably few objects can be defined as specifically second-century, and even fewer as specifically third-century. In the north of Britain, chronology is more clearly defined by changes in military equipment, including brooches, but in the south of Britain small finds over this period add little to the dating evidence available from ceramics and coins.

It was hoped that the situation could be clarified by the Insula IX project, with marked differences being revealed between the artefacts of Period 3 and those of Period 4, but such has not been the case. There are certainly second- to third-century artefacts present in Period 3, and some third- to fourth-century ones in Period 4, but these are few in number. A high proportion of early Roman material is present in both Period 3 and Period 4, as it was in the late Roman assemblage from Insula IX (Crummy 2006a, 122) and also in the overlying ploughsoil, giving a misleading overall impression of a first- and second-century body of material, with only a limited number of later finds present.

The small finds from the various context groups (Objects) that have been used to chart the changing pattern of land use in Insula IX are briefly catalogued in a series of tables in Appendix 2. They are summarised below by Object and, where appropriate, context, with detailed descriptions reserved for artefacts of particular interest, either in terms of site context or the wider provincial or inter-provincial context. The discussion at the end of this chapter presents the material by functional group, and seeks to establish how the Insula IX material might be used to mark the shifts between early to mid, and mid to late Roman small finds assemblages, even when blurred by the presence of residual material.

CATALOGUE

PERIOD 3 TIMBER BUILDINGS MRTB 1/ERTB 1 [= ERTB 4] (Object 50037) (Appendix 2, Table 27)

Object 50037 produced a comparatively high proportion of dress accessories and other small personalia, much of which may be debris directly associated with the occupation of the building. Among them is a T-shaped brooch with a lozenge-shaped expansion in the middle of the bow set with enamel, dated from the late first century into the middle of the second century (FIG. 54, No. 1, SF 2985). This is Hull's Type 122, a western form made in the lower Severn area, perhaps in the Mendips. Ten examples were among the large group of brooches offered as votives at the shrine on Nor'nour, Isles of Scilly (Hull 1968, fig. 13, 37–46; forthcoming, Type 122; Hattat 1987, 109–10, fig. 38, 918–19).

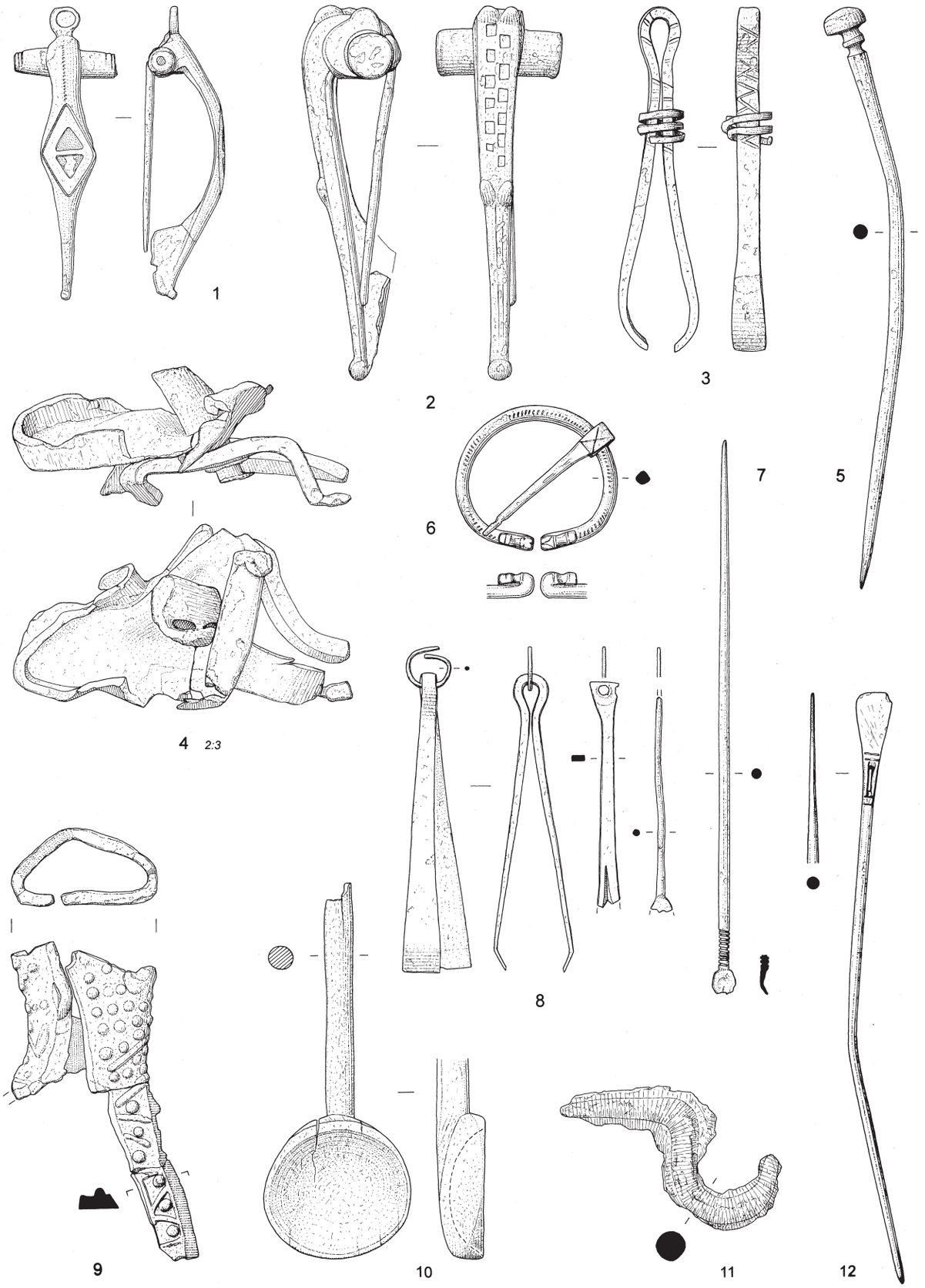

FIG. 54. Small finds: Period 3 timber buildings MRTB 1/ERTB 1 (Object 50037). Scale 1:1 except No. 4 (2:3) and No. 11 (1:2). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

A second western T-shaped brooch with the same date range and possibly from the same source came from a floor level in Object 50037. Belonging to Hull's Type 110, it has an enamelled panel on the upper bow, above small leaf-like side mouldings (FIG. 54, No. 2, SF 3256). From the same context came copper-alloy tweezers with a sliding clip made of coiled wire around the blades (FIG. 54, No. 3, SF 3484), an ivory peg (in very poor condition), and a crude lead candelabrum, made by slotting a tripod candlestick through the base of an open lamp, effectively converting the latter into a drip tray (FIG. 54, No. 4, SF 3037). The poor condition of the object (both elements are crushed) implies that it may have gone out of use some time before being deposited. Lead tripod candlesticks have an eastern and largely southern distribution and are often decorated with a relief geometric pattern, with most thus decorated coming from late Roman contexts, although there is one from an Antonine context at Carlisle and see below for a second example from Object 50037 (Eckardt 2002, 149–50, 339; Major and Eddy 1986), whereas the Silchester candlestick is plain and of earlier date. Lead open lamps are more widely found, although none was recorded from Silchester by Eckardt (2002, 331–3).

A large group of artefacts came from the latest phase of the building. Several predate its construction and are presumably residual. They include a Nauheim derivative brooch dated to *c.* A.D. 43–80/5, along with a frit melon bead that had probably gone out of use about the time the building was constructed. These two pieces, therefore, call into question the direct association with Object 50037 of other personalia and household equipment from the same context. Among the former is a complete hairpin of Cool's Group 6 (1990, 157), which dates to the later first and second century (FIG. 54, No. 5, SF 2860), and a penannular brooch with cast moulded terminals and small nicks on the upper face of the hoop (FIG. 54, No. 6, SF 2877) belonging to Fowler's Type D2, examples of which mainly come from southern Britain; the form probably dates to the second century (Fowler 1960, 152, 176). Other dress accessories are a copper-alloy finger-ring, a possible second one of iron, and an iron strap-plate, which may be from a harness strap instead of a belt. Toilet instruments from the group include a complete long-handled toilet spoon (FIG. 54, No. 7, SF 2576), used for extracting small quantities of scented unguents or cosmetics from toilet flasks or in medical procedures (Jackson 1986, 128, fig. 4, 28), a plain nail-cleaner and tweezers, and a complete toilet set held by a wire suspension loop, again of plain undated form (FIG. 54, No. 8, SF 2079). The toilet set came from a layer associated with the construction of MB 1, and may be a votive deposit.

Domestic equipment from this group of contexts consists of a second, damaged, tripod candlestick with geometric relief decoration (FIG. 54, No. 9, SF 2421) and a round-bowled bone spoon, a form belonging primarily to the first and second centuries (FIG. 54, No. 10, SF 2767), while a small pottery counter may have been used as a game counter or as a lid. Among the fittings are a wall-hook (FIG. 54, No. 11, SF 2660) and the bit from an L-shaped lift-key, and other finds include the point from an iron stylus and a copper-alloy needle with spatulate head (FIG. 54, No. 12, SF 2477). The very narrow eye of this needle, coupled with the width of the head, with the one pointing to the use of fine thread and the other to the use of fabric of coarse weave (Crummy 1983, 65), calls into question its use for sewing. The occurrence of styli of identical form but lacking the eye, e.g. at Wilcote, Oxon. (Hands 1993, fig. 26, 13; 1998, fig. 20, 57–60), suggests either that the Wilcote styli are unfinished needles, or that objects such as SF 2477 may have been dual-purpose items of writing equipment, with the eraser and point of a stylus for writing on wax, but an eye that allowed it to be used to sew together separate sheets of papyrus or other loose-leaf writing material.

PERIOD 3 MASONRY BUILDING 1 (Object 50018) (Appendix 2, Table 28)

Deposits predating the construction of Object 50018 contained two complete brooches, a Nauheim derivative (FIG. 55, No. 13, SF 3913) and a Colchester B derivative (FIG. 55, No. 14, SF 3933), the former dating to *c.* A.D. 43–80/5 and the latter to A.D. 50–70, and also a complete iron knife of an early Roman type with integral handle (FIG. 55, No. 15, SF 3717), a form represented in mid-first century A.D. contexts at Hod Hill but not present in Late Iron Age assemblages (Manning 1985, 113). These three objects provide a *terminus post quem* for MB

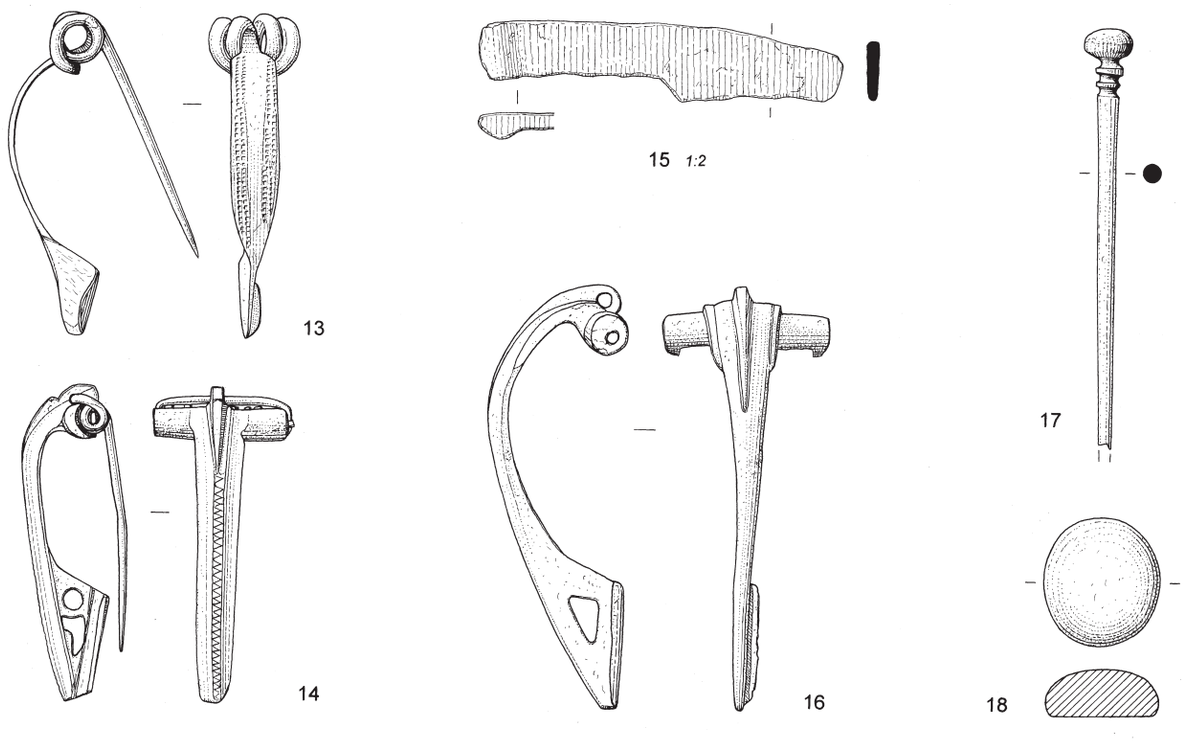

FIG. 55. Small finds: Period 3 Masonry Building 1 (Object 50018). Scale 1:1 except No. 15 (1:2). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

1, and, given their intact condition, may be deliberately placed foundation deposits, or perhaps termination deposits for an earlier building.

From contexts associated with the walls of MB 1 came a pottery counter, a fragment of a pottery spindlewhorl, a copper-alloy Polden Hill brooch (FIG. 55, No. 16, SF 2486) and a copper-alloy hairpin of Cool's Group 6 (FIG. 55, No. 17, SF 2487). The hairpin dates from the mid-first century to the mid-second century and is also represented in Object 50037. The brooch is Flavian, slightly later than those from the construction deposits but still earlier than the start date of Period 3.

The floor levels in the building produced mainly scrap fragments, including the foot of a Late Iron Age Langton Down brooch. Exceptions are a second pottery counter and a glass counter (FIG. 55, No. 18, SF 2313). Glass counters are usually found intact and are often represented in urban assemblages, a reflection of the popularity of gambling and of board games played in leisure hours. Several other glass counters have been found in Period 3 and 4 contexts.

PERIOD 3 MASONRY BUILDING 2 (Object 50019) (Appendix 2, Table 29)

A feature of the artefacts from Object 50019 is that a substantial proportion are intact, or nearly so, and many of these complete pieces appear from their contexts to have been deliberately buried. Such an interpretation needs to be approached with care given the finds-rich nature of Roman deposits, and condition at time of burial is not always a reliable criterion for deliberate deposition.

Three complete or near-complete brooches in Object 50019 all predate the building's construction by several decades. Although they would fall into the group of complete artefacts and so may be deliberate placements, there is a lengthy period between their well defined period of use and the date of their burial, making them more likely to be residual. One associated context contained a complete Colchester brooch, a late pre-Roman Iron Age type made from *c.* A.D. 10 to 40/3, with most in use at the Conquest deposited by *c.* A.D. 50 (FIG. 56, No. 19, SF 2786).

From another such context came part of a Nauheim derivative brooch with narrow wire bow, an imported type that first appeared *c.* A.D. 43 and was in use until at least *c.* A.D. 80/5 (FIG. 56, No. 20, SF 3133). (Corney's dating (2000, 337) for similar brooches on the Silchester forum-basilica site is much too broad.) Although the appearance of the type was linked to the Conquest, the high numbers on settlements in Britain implies use by civilians. A brooch in floor 1818 is a Hod Hill with small lugs at the top of the bow, which has a date-range of A.D. 43 to *c.* A.D. 60/5 (FIG. 56, No. 21, SF 2269). Hod Hills were much used by Roman military personnel, and this particular form (Hull Type 63) also occurs at sites such as Hod Hill, Cirencester, Richborough and Colchester, as well as on the forum-basilica site at Silchester (Corney 2000, fig. 153, 63, 67). The length of the foot on this example is shorter than is usual compared to that of the bow. Other brooches are represented only by small fragments. That a Late Iron Age brooch and two early Roman period brooches were curated for many decades to be deposited well into the second century seems unlikely, and these items can probably be discounted as deliberate deposits unless the date of construction of MB 2 has been set too late.

Other dress accessories from Object 50019 are a fragment of a turquoise frit melon bead and a copper-alloy hairpin, both from floor levels. The bead is another artefact introduced at the Conquest, generally occurring in mid to late first-century contexts and there is some doubt that in Britain they continued in use into the early years of the second century. The hairpin (FIG. 56, No. 22, SF 2642) has a globular head above a series of mouldings, with a depression in the top of the head that probably originally held a small piece of coloured glass. This feature links it to Cool's Group 21, dated to the second to third centuries (1990, 170), but the mouldings at the top of the shaft are not typical of that form. The shaft has been bent almost at a right angle near the top, a characteristic of deliberately mutilated votive deposits, and the possibility that this is an *ex voto* is high; it may relate to a nearby temple or shrine rather than MB 2 (*see* Discussion).

Toilet instruments are particularly well-represented in Object 50019, with one complete toilet set coming from a floor level (FIG. 56, No. 23, SF 2942), another from a wall context (FIG. 56, No. 24, SF 2961), and a tweezers fragment from a post-hole. The end of the ear-scoop on FIG. 56, No. 24, SF 2961 is missing, but such damage is common on these instruments and is likely to be a result of the decay of the extremely thin metal of the scoop during burial rather than of wear. Reviews of toilet instruments from London and Colchester have highlighted a marked distinction between votive deposition of complete toilet sets and the discarding of worn fragmentary instruments in ordinary domestic contexts (Crummy 2006b, 65; Crummy with Pohl 2008, 18–19). This implies that all complete sets that do not come from burials or ritual foci require careful scrutiny of their contexts to determine whether or not they may be formal offerings. As both sets from Object 50019 come from construction contexts, both could well be deliberate foundation deposits, in which case they probably date to close to the time of their burial, although neither can be closely dated on typological features. On neither set does the nail-cleaner belong to one of the regional types established during recent studies of small toilet instruments (Crummy and Eckardt 2003; Eckardt and Crummy 2008), thereby falling into the large number of toilet instruments with no distinguishing features that cannot be grouped into a formal typological system, although the bellied blade on FIG. 56, No. 23, SF 2942 is characteristic of a number of nail-cleaners from southern Britain (Eckardt and Crummy 2008, 122).

Of the remaining items from Object 50019, an iron needle from a post-hole is a comparatively rare survival. Although such objects were probably common in the Romano-British period, they would be difficult to identify without the use of X-radiography. An iron mason's trowel from a wall context represents not only a particularly apposite context for such a tool, but also another unusual survival and another possible deliberate deposit (FIG. 56, No. 25, SF 3140). In form, with rounded shoulders to the blade and integral offset tang, it matches an example from Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 115, 2975).

PERIOD 3 NORTHERN PITS (Object 500029) (Appendix 2, Table 32)

The northern pits contained few small finds. Parts of two iron joiner's dogs were found in cess-pit 4835 (Object 50028). Like the examples in the south-eastern pits 5693 (Period 3) and 3102

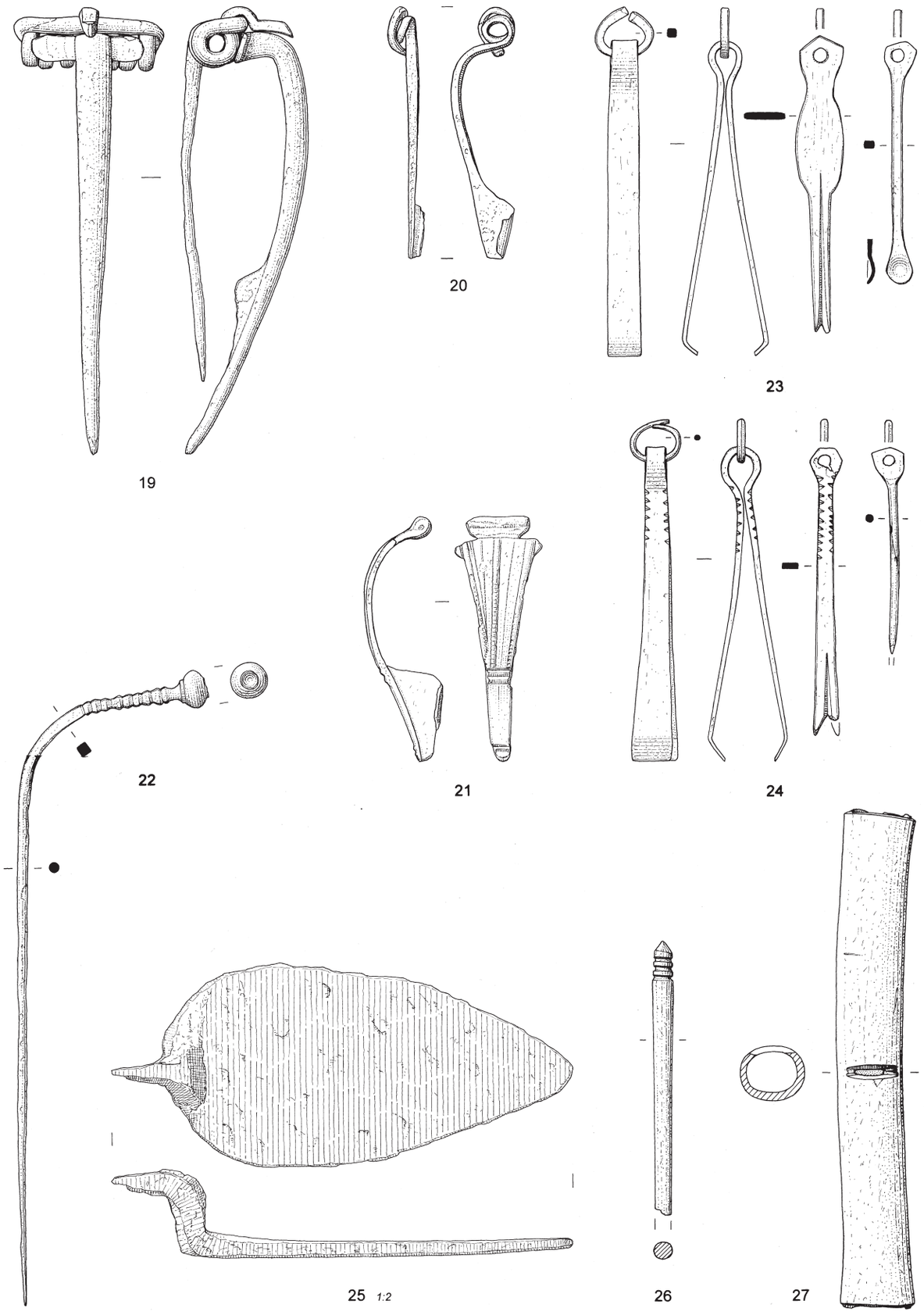

FIG. 56. Small finds: Period 3 Masonry Building 2 (Object 50019) and south-eastern pits (Object 500017). Scale 1:1 except No. 25 (1:2). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

(Period 4), they may relate to the cess-pit's construction, perhaps coming from timber braces or lining, or from a wooden lid. Finds from well 2234 (Object 41016) included part of an iron stylus, a tile counter and a pottery counter. None of the objects can be closely dated.

PERIOD 3 SOUTH-EASTERN PITS (Object 500017) (Appendix 2, Table 31)

Pit 5039 (Object 44008)

The pit contained only small pieces of scrap that cannot be closely dated.

Pit 5693 (Object 500035)

Pit 5693 included two small fragments of a high-tin bronze mirror, probably from one of the mirror types imported into Britain from the second half of the first century from the Continent, especially from the workshops at Nijmegen (Lloyd-Morgan 1981, introduction p. x). The pit also held two joiner's dogs which may have come from timberwork lining or covering the pit. More were found in other negative features: two in Period 3 cess-pit 4835 (above), one in Period 4 well 5735, and three in Period 4 pit 3102.

'Pit' 6290 (Object 500036)

Among the finds from the slump into pit 6290, post-dating its primary fill, was part of an early Roman hairpin (FIG. 56, No. 26, SF 3806), a glass counter, and a bone tube cut from a bird ulna, which is naturally hollow (FIG. 56, No. 27, SF 3935). The tube may have been used as a bobbin. A small slit has been cut through one side of the bone at the midpoint. Both the surface of the tube and the sides of the slit are well polished. Similar tubes lacking the central slit have been found in medieval contexts at York and other towns. Their use is uncertain, but one possibility is that groups were set into a wooden stock to form a syrinx, or set of pan-pipes (MacGregor *et al.* 1999, 1977); this may be the case with the Silchester ulna, although a finger-stop is not used on the tubes of a syrinx as the different notes are achieved by varying the lengths of the pipes and there is no break in the polish at either end or on the sides that would be present had it been just one of a bundle of bound tubes.

PERIOD 3 OCCUPATION (Object 701) (Appendix 2, Table 33)

The assemblage from the sequence of layers and features comprising Object 701 is here briefly described in the chronological sequence of the contexts.

The Period 3 dumps and gravels, including the dump of ceramic building materials, principally contained dress and toilet accessories, with some household equipment and a single piece of cavalry harness.

In Object 701 there is a marked paucity of iron objects compared to several of the Period 3 pit groups described above (Object 500017). Dated dress accessories include two Nauheim derivative brooches of *c.* A.D. 43–80/5 (FIG. 57, Nos 28–9, SFs 3072 and 3450), a type represented in contexts associated with the Period 3 buildings (see above), and one example of each early form of bone hairpin, Types 1 and 2, with the plain tapering shafts characteristic of the period from the mid-first century into the second century. A nail-cleaner and tweezers (FIG 57, Nos 30–1, SFs 3066 and 3067) from context 4270 may both have belonged to the same set; although neither is of a form that can be unequivocally dated to the first century, in this context they are most likely to belong to the Claudian-Flavian period of mass production of this type of toilet equipment (Crummy and Eckardt 2003, 61; Eckardt and Crummy 2008, 62–5). A fragment of a round-bowled spoon (FIG. 57, No. 32, SF 3052) is one of several present in this mid-Roman assemblage, many of which come from secondary contexts and may be of mid to late first-century date. A small phalera from cavalry harness with traces of tinning on the surface is characteristic of the first century; it too may date to as early as the Claudian period (FIG. 57, No. 33, SF 3474).

The silt horizon that lay above the dumps and gravels contained many similar items, such as a

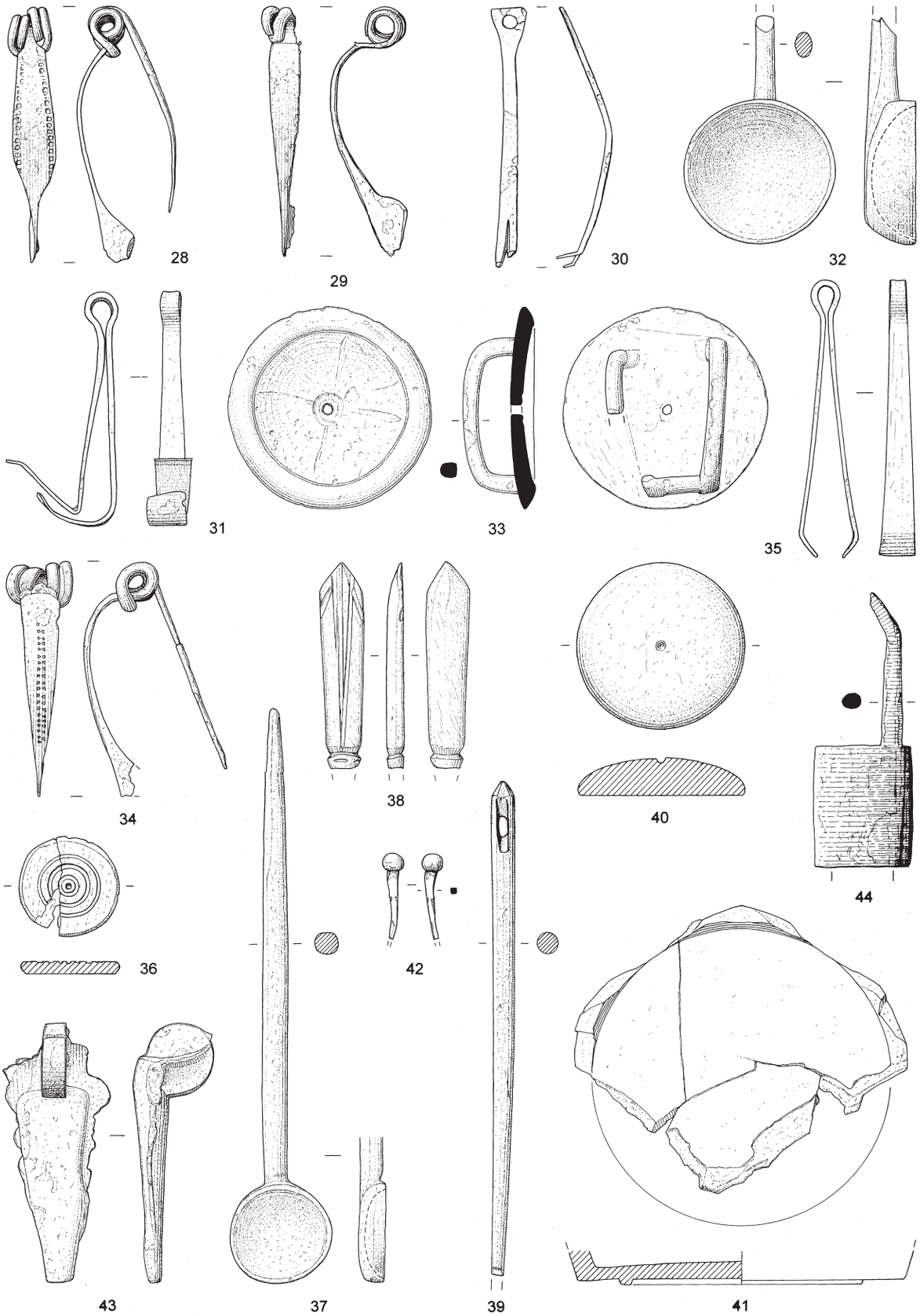

FIG. 57. Small finds: Period 3 south-eastern occupation (Object 701). Scale 1:1. (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

Type 1 hairpin, a Nauheim derivative brooch (FIG. 57, No. 34, SF 3216) and tweezers (FIG. 57, No. 35, SF 3308). In addition the silts produced a pottery counter, two bone counters, one plain and one decorated with concentric circles (FIG. 57, No. 36, SF 3357), and a probable bar iron offcut, waste debris from blacksmithing.

The assemblage from the possible building MRTB 3, cutting into the silts, is quite unusual. Five of the nine items recovered are of bone, and three of the five are round-bowled spoons. One is complete (FIG. 57, No. 37, SF 3262) and two are damaged. The remaining two bone objects are a fragment of a shaft that may be part of the handle of one of the damaged spoons and a short, pointed terminal (FIG. 57, No. 38, SF 3266) of uncertain identification but bearing some resemblance to bone spatulae (Mikler 1997, Taf. 27, 1–8). The metal objects include a copper-alloy needle.

Part of a round-bowled spoon also came from the clay accumulation overlying the lower silts, with other items from this group including a bone hinge unit, part of a shale armlet, and two needles, one of bone (FIG. 57, No. 39, SF 2391) and one of copper alloy. The upper silts above the clay contained only a fragment of a tanged blade and a plano-convex bone counter (FIG. 57, No. 40, SF 3405) of late Roman form (Crummy 1983, 91, Type 3). The recovery of this example from the silts points to a late second-century appearance for the type, which is not common and is generally found in fourth-century contexts.

As might be expected, the numerous objects from the rubble make-up overlying the upper silts are generally small pieces of scrap, most probably residual and derived from midden waste. Other than a Type 1 hairpin and a small fragment of a round-bowled spoon (both early Roman), none of the items in this assemblage can be dated. They include a small shale dish (FIG. 57, No. 41, SF 2881). Two items are unusual. One is a small gold stud, the square-section shank of which suggests that it was used to ornament a wooden object, perhaps a box or piece of furniture (FIG. 57, No. 42, SF 2245); with evidence for gold-working on Insula IX, the possibility that the stud was locally made cannot be ruled out. The other object is an unfinished casting of one element of a copper-alloy strap-hinge; a fragment of casting debris also came from the rubble. On the hinge the flashings along the line where the two halves of the mould joined together are unfiled, and the lug for attachment to the second element of the hinge is unpierced (FIG. 57, No. 43, SF 2362). This piece is firm evidence for the manufacture of wooden artefacts at Silchester as well as of the metal fittings needed to complete them. Hinges of this type were used on mid-first-century folding game boards (as P. Crummy *et al.* 2007, fig. 111, CF47.20b–c) and on box lids (Riha 2001, Abb. 19, 21 and 23, Tafn 12–23). A closely similar example has been found at the Roman temple at Farley Heath, Surrey (Bird 2007, 56, fig. 24, 98).

The final group of contexts in Object 701 are defined as late second-century occupation, but, like those from the rubble make-up, they produced mostly small pieces of undated scrap, including a small quantity of copper-alloy casting debris. They include an unusual form of iron goad prick, with the point extending from a ferrule made from a rolled strip (FIG. 57, No. 44, SF 2886). A wire armlet with damaged slip-knot join is a form more usually found in late Roman burials and probably represents the latest item in Object 701.

PERIOD 4 MASONRY BUILDING 3 (Object 50046) (Appendix 2, Table 30)

Unlike Object 50019, which contained many complete or near-complete artefacts, Object 50046 produced mainly fragmented pieces, with most complete items being small and/or of durable materials such as pottery or glass. Many are certainly, and others probably, first-century in date and residual in their contexts. These contrast with some items from the dark earth and the robbing of the stone walls, which date to the late third century.

Early items include a Colchester BB derivative brooch, dated *c.* A.D. 65–85 (FIG. 58, No. 45, SF 1077), and two Nauheim derivative brooches, dated *c.* A.D. 43–80/5 (FIG. 58, Nos 47–8, SF 1232 and SF 1286), from the floor levels, and a Rearhook brooch, dated *c.* A.D. 40–60/5, from the construction clays (FIG. 58, No. 48, SF 4044). More unusual are a peltate vessel foot (FIG. 58, No. 49, SF 2013) and a strainer-plate from a strainer bowl. Very little metal survived from the latter, which was very thin and had been crumpled or folded, but was clearly visible as a stain in the soil.

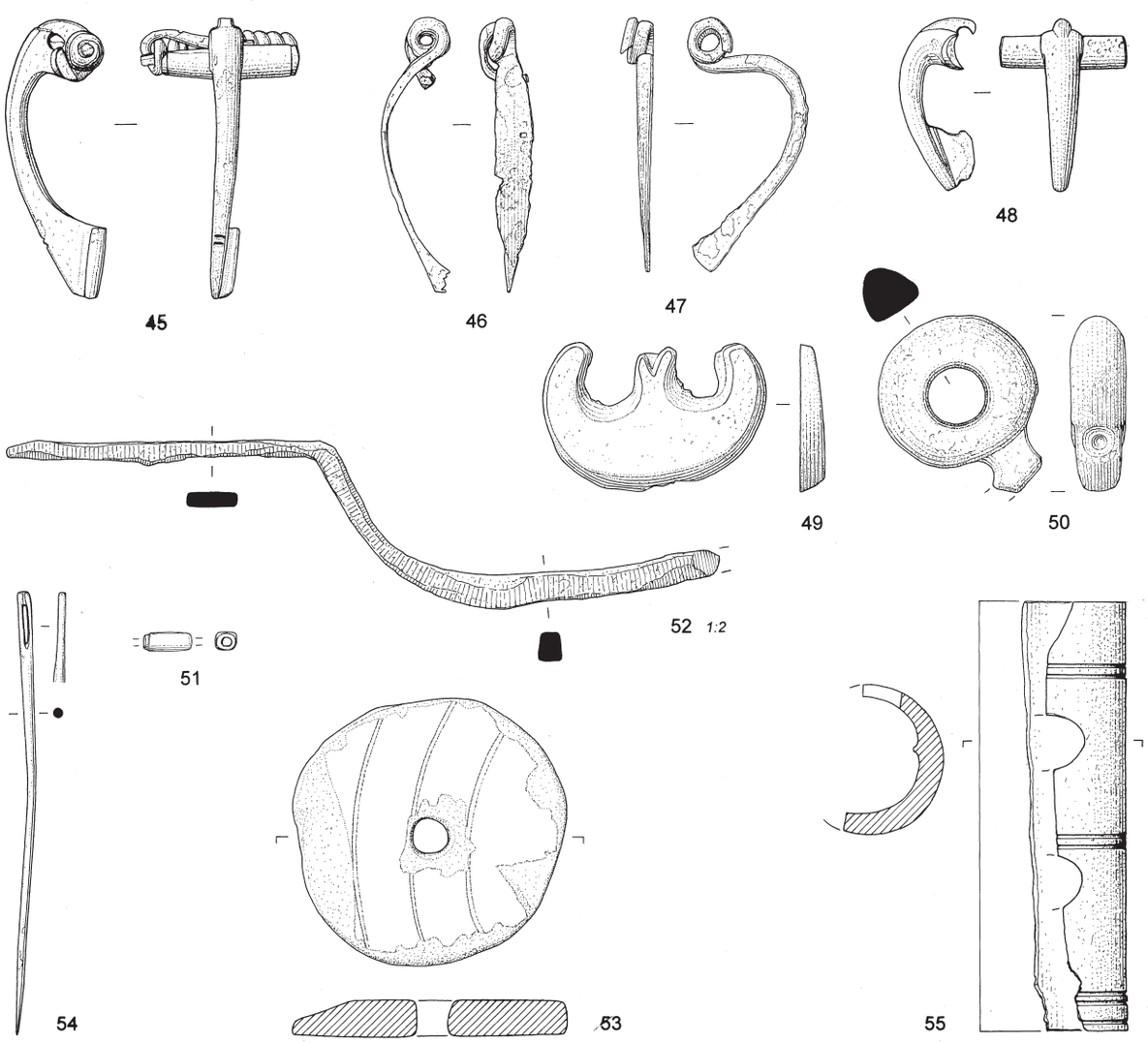

FIG. 58. Small finds: Period 4 Masonry Building 3 (Object 50046). Scale 1:1 except No. 52 (1:2). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

Although found separately, both these objects may originally have been part of the same vessel. The distinctive thin sheet-metal strainer-plates, bearing patterns of small punched holes, were fitted by soldering their edges to the wall, base and spill-plates of strainer bowls. They served to sieve out solids such as herbs and spices used to flavour warmed or brewed drinks before the liquid was served. Such plates can be seen on the strainer bowl from the richly-furnished Welwyn Garden City burial of *c.* 10 B.C. (Stead 1967, fig. 12), and on the mid-first-century bowl from the Doctor's burial at Stanway, Essex (P. Crummy *et al.* 2007, 223, 324–5, fig. 113, f). The Silchester vessel foot is also close to those found on the Stanway bowl; although smaller and lacking the central grooving of the Stanway feet, it is similarly stouter and less elongated than those found on continental metal vessels. The Stanway strainer bowl was of the carinated form that was made in both metal and pottery in the eastern region, where most examples have been found. Exceptions come from Blain, Loire-Atlantique, Alchester in Oxfordshire, Chettle in Dorset, and Kingston Deverill in Wiltshire (ibid.; Worrell 2006, 460–2), a spread westwards that was almost certainly driven by the political upheavals of the Conquest and its aftermath. In the light of these western finds it is possible to see the Silchester foot and strainer-plate as deriving from a strainer bowl of this mid-first-century type.

All the above items are clearly residual in a Period 4 context, and indeed there is little reason to believe that any of the objects in the contexts associated with the construction of the building are of early third-century date. In the construction clays a fragment of an early Roman melon bead and a nail-cleaner from a late first- or early second-century châtelaine brooch are certainly earlier, and many of the other items consist only of small pieces of scrap, including part of an iron stylus and the iron prick from a goad. The latter would have been used in an urban context to drive animals to market or to slaughter, as well as to and from grazing grounds; the goad pricks from this assemblage can be matched to the evidence for the keeping of animals within Insula IX. A plain copper-alloy terret from the harness of a driven animal (FIG. 58, No. 50, SF 3002) is a more unusual find from an urban site. Lacking the lipped mouldings that characterise many Late Iron Age terrets, this plain example is probably Roman, but cannot be more closely dated. One object that may belong to the third century is a small blue glass cylinder bead of rectangular section, a form typical of the small beads found in late Roman burials (FIG. 58, No. 51, SF 2136).

Where the objects in the floor levels can be dated, they are similarly earlier than their contexts, such as the brooches and vessel fragments described above. An exception here may be an iron latchlifter, which is complete apart from the end of the hook (FIG. 58, No. 52, SF 1121). A single link from a loop-in-loop chain found in hearth 1544 derives from a necklace or brooch chain and is unlikely to be contemporary with its context. A spindlewhorl from a post-hole was well used when buried, being worn around the spindle hole and chipped on the edge and on both faces; made of *terra nigra*, it must predate the Flavian period (FIG. 58, No. 53, SF 1805).

The objects associated with the verandah include a pottery counter rough-out made from the base of an orange-ware vessel, probably a flagon, with the edge clipped to form a regular roundel but not worked to a smooth finish. It has none of the features associated with wear as a counter, such as abrasion or spalling on either face. A copper-alloy needle from the same context (FIG. 58, No. 54, SF 3025) is of a form that dates to the third century or later (Crummy 1983, 67, Type 3). Both objects are likely to be contemporary with their contexts, although other items from the verandah are probably residual, such as a large fragment of a bone hinge unit with incised grooving and two dowel-holes (FIG. 58, No. 55, SF 3165).

Although the small finds from Object 50046 cover nearly the entire Roman period, none need be as late as the early fifth century. The latest items are probably two examples of the simple cog-wheel armlet with close-set crenellations, Lankhills Type D1d, which dates to the late fourth century and does not seem to continue in use into the fifth century like the variant with toothing between more widely spaced crenellations (G. Clarke 1979, 305, fig. 37, 437; Crummy 2006a, 129). Both are from the dark earth which developed subsequent to the demolition of MB 3 after A.D. 287 (Fulford *et al.* 2006, 18–19). A fragment of clay tobacco pipe from context 1788 (SF 1143) points to some contamination of the gravel floors by the Victorian explorations in Insula IX.

PERIOD 4 SOUTH-EASTERN PITS AND WELLS (Object 500017) (Appendix 2, Table 31)

Well 1750 (Object 500020)

Well 1750 produced only an intrusive modern iron fitting, found on the surface, and a scrap of leather.

Pit 2601 (Object 500032)

In contrast to the debris found in most of the pits and wells in Object 500017, the secondary fill of pit 2601 contained a complete iron folding-knife or razor with an ivory handle in the form of two coupling dogs (FIG. 59, No. 56, SF 1734; cf. FIG. 43). Traces of leather noted during conservation suggest that it was buried in a leather pouch. As the pit also contained two dog skeletons, the bones of a raven and two doubly-pierced pot sherds, this object can be seen as a deliberate formal deposit, part of the ritual activity focusing on dogs and holed pottery that took

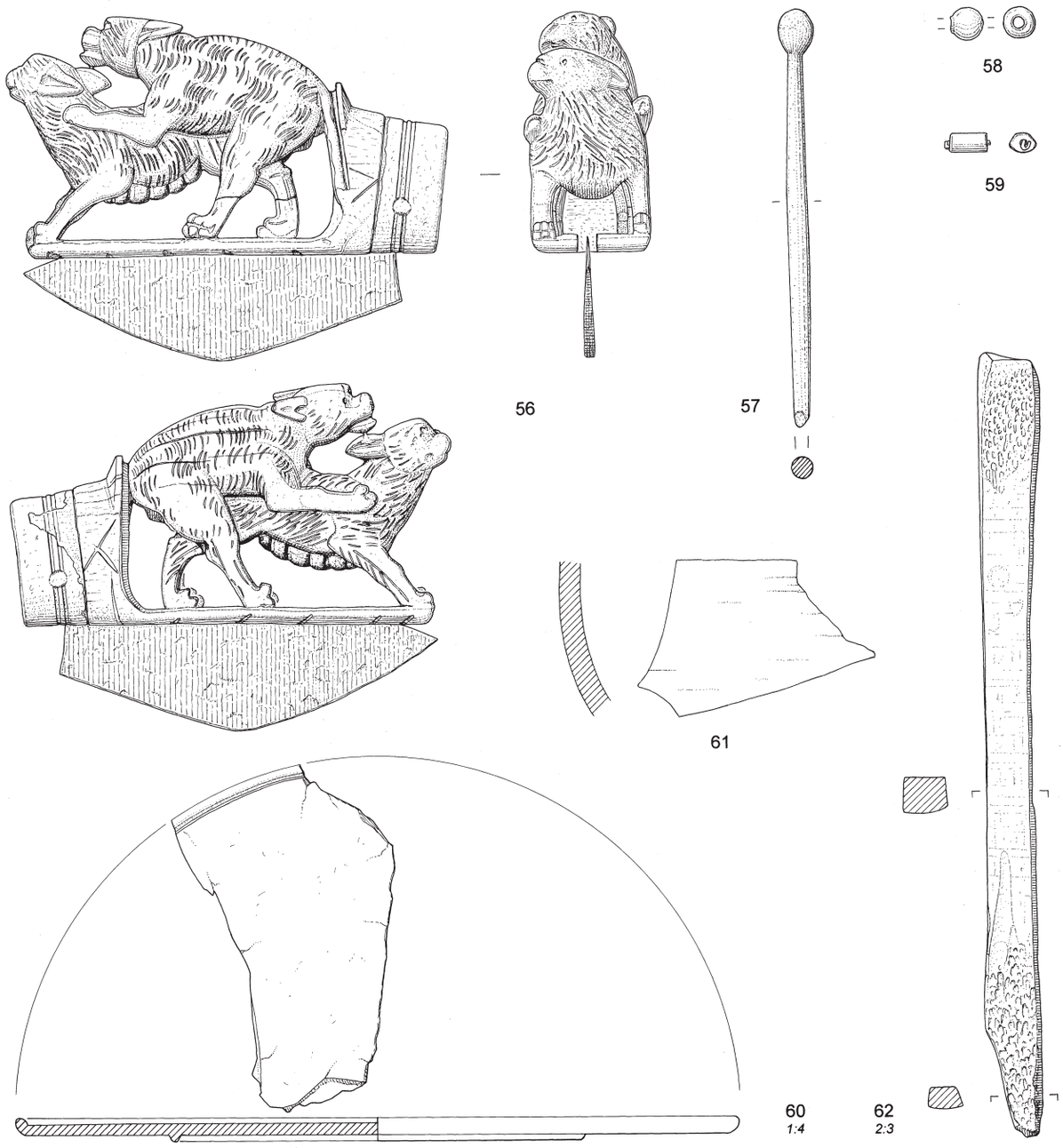

FIG. 59. Small finds: Period 4 south-eastern pits (1) (Object 500017). Scale 1:1 except No. 60 (1:4) and No. 62 (2:3). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

place in Insula IX (Fulford 2001, 201–2; Eckardt and Crummy 2002). The pit dates to the early third century, a date that agrees with the general second- to early/mid-third-century date for many knives of this form.

The lively scene on the handle shows the animals in a typical mating pose, with the dog's back humped as he clasps the bitch's sides, while she braces all four legs firmly on the ground; both animals have their ears laid back. Comparison with mating felines confirms the identification of these animals as dogs — female felines lie on the ground during mating — and the possibility that this is a variation of the hound and hare hunting scene found on copper-alloy folding-knife handles can also be dismissed in the light of the typical humped pose of the male and the swollen

teats of the bitch that show her to be already lactating. Their pelts are shown by incised straight and wavy lines and they stand on a small platform with a central slot to allow the blade to pass through when folded. They were intended to be viewed facing right, as from the other side their faces are obscured. As is often the case with figures carved to be seen in profile, when seen full-face they appear asymmetrical.

Behind the dogs the ivory is solid and elliptical in section, with an incised cross at the base on the front side and a single diagonal line at the rear. There is a distinctive concave extension rising behind and attached to the rump of the dog, providing some strength to the carving. The handle is rebated close to the blade and has two grooves around the circumference. This area was originally covered by a band of copper-alloy sheet, which has now almost completely disappeared. The blade is pivoted on a copper-alloy pin set through the lower side of this area. Handles with similar extensions come from Florence, Cologne and Hüttwil in Switzerland (von Mercklin 1940, Taf. 35, 2, 7; Degen 1984, Abb. 5). The iron blade is short and wide, with the straight cutting edge set into the gap in the platform. The back rises slightly before curving down to the tip.

Boon has suggested that blades of this form were probably used for trimming the nails, but they are more widely accepted as razors (Boon 1991, 22–3; Riha 1986, 28–32). The short, wide blade with rounded or angled back compares closely to the form of razors of the Anglo-Saxon period, and the apotropaic imagery used on the handles makes a strong case for their identification as razors. The figure types used on handles from Gaul, Germany and Italy are those associated with fecundity, death and resurrection, prophylactic images that could be invoked to avert the danger inherent in shaving — the misuse of a cut-throat razor could prove fatal. The animals shown on knives where sufficient of the blade remains to identify it as belonging to this group are dogs, monkeys, an owl (on a very small knife, possibly a model), and a long-muzzled animal that has been interpreted as an anteater (aardvark), a species today confined to southern Africa but seemingly among the fauna of Sub-Saharan Africa during the Roman period (von Mercklin 1940, Taf. 35, 5–7; Degen 1984, Abb. 3, 4; Grapin and Sivignon 1994, esp. figs 1–2, 4, 6, 8; Bertrand 1999, fig. 56; Rodet-Berlarbi and Dieudonné-Glad 2008, 152–3, fig. 18). Anthropomorphic images consist of a lyre-player (Apollo or Orpheus), a shepherd carrying a lamb across his shoulders, gladiators and lovers (von Mercklin 1940, Taf. 39, 2, Taf. 41, 1–2; Degen 1984, esp. Abb. 2, 6; Jackson and Friendship-Taylor 2003). An elaborate handle in the British Museum, said to be from Ravenna, shows two tigers attacking a goat (*BMQ* 37 (1973), 128–9, fig. 61), and large felines, chiefly panthers, occur on the handles of a number of razors that are probably also from Italy, along with single examples of a ram and a bull (Venturi 1926, pls 58–61). The association of dogs with chthonic deities and the passage to the underworld is well documented (e.g. Jenkins 1957, 64–5; Merrifield 1987, 46–7, 67; Green 1997, 176–8; Alexander and Pullinger 1999, 45–7, 53–4). Lions denote the all-devouring jaws of death over life, while in the North-West provinces the depiction of African beasts evokes the fecundity of that continent as a symbol of the underworld, teeming with strange and threatening creatures (Henig 1984). Rams and bulls, as well as being sacrificial animals, are also images of fecundity, as are the human lovers, while the lyre-player, the good shepherd, the panthers of Dionysus-Bacchus and the lions through their association with Cybele are images of resurrection (Degen 1984; Henig 1977, 356; Henig and Wickenden 1988, 107). The Silchester handle unites the three themes in a single image, the dog as guide and guardian of the soul on the journey to the underworld, and the coupling pair demonstrating not only fecundity but also rebirth through the cycle of new life evidenced by the female's swollen teats.

The deposition of this razor is laden with meaning not only by reason of its context but also from the associations of the scene shown on the handle; moreover, as a continental-made and uniquely beautiful object, expensive in both material as well as execution, its deliberate burial would not have been lightly undertaken. What remains obscure is whether or not its deposition was directly related to the two dogs in the primary fill of the feature. If genuinely associated, it may be seen as either a grave gift accompanying the burial of a pair of valued dogs or as a votive offering connected with the ritual life of the inhabitants of Insula IX. Even if not associated, it is undoubtedly a deliberate deposit. The possibility that it might have been used in the skinning

of dogs, for which there is some evidence in this part of the site, is a potentially new use for this type of object that could impact on the interpretation of the related British and continental material.

Pit 3406 (Object 500033)

The early to mid-third-century pit 3406 contained a large and varied number of objects, with dress accessories, hobnails from footwear and household items predominating. Datable items include early Roman hairpins and one with a globular head (FIG. 59, No. 57, SF 2918), a form that first appears in the mid-second century and was still in use in the fourth century (Crummy 1983, 21–2, Type 3; 1992, 144). Groups of hobnails, in one case consisting of at least 32 examples, were scattered throughout the fill. These clusters are unlikely to derive from a single pair of nailed shoes, sandals or boots but point to the disposal of old footwear over a period of time. The pit may have remained open for waste disposal or was dug for the immediate burial of midden waste. A degree of economic wealth in Insula IX at this period, matched only by the razor deposited in pit 2601, is attested by a silver-in-glass bead (FIG. 59, No. 58, SF 3178) and a short length of gold wire threaded through a bead of beryl (FIG. 59, No. 59, SF 2203). A similar fragment from a beryl and gold wire necklace has been found at Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 36, 1422–3); such necklaces were no doubt continental-made items imported for sale by merchants trading in jewellery in the major towns of Roman Britain. Household items from the pit include a long iron rod with knobbed head that may be from a piece of furniture, a large fragment from a low-walled shale platter, with a diameter of about 280 mm (FIG. 59, No. 60, SF 2900), and a sherd from a smaller concave shale vessel, probably a bowl (FIG. 59, No. 61, SF 3148). The platter is similar in size to platters from Silchester and London (Lawson 1976, 262, 80; Marsden 1967, 53, fig. 54).

Two unusual bone implements from pit 3406, both made from long bones, are probably craft tools. One is a long point with a worn tip, the sides of its square-section shaft polished from use (FIG. 59, No. 62, SF 2914). The other has two prongs at one end and has been hollowed out, probably to take a handle in a different material. It also has a perforation cut into one side of the shaft; the sides of the hole are worn but it is not absolutely circular (FIG. 60, No. 63, SF 3097). The prongs also show signs of wear. Shorter double-pronged tools of the medieval period are sometimes described as lucets, used in braid-making, or as thread-twisters, although this identification, or any association with textile manufacture, has not been proven (Walton Rogers 1997, 1790; MacGregor *et al.* 1999, 1994–5). Walton Rogers gives lack of wear on the medieval pronged tools from York as one reason for discounting them as lucets. The wear on the prongs of the Silchester tool may go some way to supporting its identification as such a tool, but its size and sturdiness militate against its use in delicate work and make it more suitable for use in a craft where a greater degree of force would be necessary. Both tools would be suitable for use as awls in leather-working.

Pit 3102 (Object 500034)

The fill of pit 3102 has also been dated to the third century. As with pit 3406, this feature contained scattered groups of hobnails and appears to have been open for some time. Like pit 5693 above and cess-pit 4835 in Object 500029 (the northern pits, see above), it also contained three joiner's dogs that probably come from timbers lining or bracing the sides of the pit, or from a wooden lid, both possible if the pit was in use for a prolonged period. Many of the other objects found in the pit consist of small pieces of scrap, but they include a rake prong — an object type chiefly used in horticulture or for clearing up animal bedding or dung, although this example came from the gravel capping of the pit and may have been used and lost during the course of this work.

Well 5735 (Object 500037)

Among the iron fragments from well 5735 was part of a bucket handle and a joiner's dog, the

former perhaps lost during use, the latter perhaps from a wooden superstructure or cover (see above). Organic items, rare in the dry soils of Silchester, consisted of a few scraps of leather and a wooden writing-tablet. Some of the leather may derive from footwear, as groups of hobnails were also found, but two pieces are offcuts, pointing to leather-working in the area. FIG. 60, No. 64, SF 4386 is a maplewood single-leaf writing-tablet (FIG. 36; Watson, below, pp. 116-17), the surface countersunk and scored to hold wax, with the remains of a handle at the top that has broken across a small hole for suspension.

Another remarkable item from the well is the handle from a *Fusshenkelkrug* or foot-handle jug (FIGS 37 and 60, No. 65, SF 4399). These are elegant composite vessels with a cast handle soldered to the body, its terminal in the form of a human foot. Either the right foot or the left, or sometimes both, may be shown; they may be naked or sandalled, with the sandal usually formed of applied white-metal strips. The toenails on SF 4399 are marked, as is usual, but the foot is otherwise quite plain, with no scarring from any appliqués. On some handles the joints of the toes are shown, and the detailing may extend to a realistically modelled leg with defined calf muscles. There is often a small curled leaf above the foot, which on the Silchester handle appears as a knob-like projection. On SF 4399 the top of the handle is marked by a cross between marginal lines. The thumb-rest is usually, although not invariably, in the form of a curled leaf, as here, and the side terminals are often shown as the heads of water birds. The shape of a bird's head with its long beak is clear on the surviving terminal of the Silchester handle (compare with Tassinari 1975, pl. 34, 174 and 179), but the incised decoration is vegetal, obscuring the image. This supports Szabó's suggestion that the detailing on these jugs was done by professional engravers who had not been involved in the manufacture of the mould (1983, 93).

Jugs of this type have a wide distribution from Thrace across to Britain, although they are not particularly numerous. Most examples come from Pannonia, Germany and Gallia Belgica, where they lie along the trade routes of the Danube and Rhine, with a further trail along the Rhône and Saône in Gaul (Reinach 1894, 333, no. 340; *Germ. Rom.* 1924, A2 V, Taf. 7, 4; Radnóti 1938, 167–8; den Boesterd 1956, 81–2, nos 288–90; Tassinari 1973; Szabó 1981; 1983; Vanvinckenroye 1984, 215; Sedlmayer 1999, Karte 3; Pirling 1993; Nenova-Merdjanova 1998). Tassinari has divided them into two groups, an eastern form with ovoid body and a western form with taller and more slender baluster-shaped body, but there is some overlap; an example of the eastern form has even been found in Britain (Crummy 2006c). Szabó suggested that the western form was the earlier, probably being produced in a Gaulish workshop in the late first century A.D., with production then spreading to the Danube region in the second century. Sedlmayer has argued that the more scattered distribution of the eastern form is evidence for a workshop in the Rhine-Danube area aiming principally for an export market. Mould fragments have also been found in both Spain and Syria, demonstrating that, as with distribution, the true pattern of production is more complex than these studies suggest.

Many examples of the eastern form come from graves, while the western examples have often been found in association with rivers, wells and springs in or near sanctuary sites, suggesting that they were purpose-made ritual, rather than domestic, vessels. In a combination of both contexts, a western-type jug was found with pottery vessels in a hoard in a cemetery at Tongeren, Belgium (Vanvinckenroye 1984, 215). The recovery of the Silchester handle from a well makes this a clear example of the association of the vessels from the western provinces with watery contexts, and we can assume that it was a votive offering. Had it simply parted from the vessel when it was lowered down the well to be filled, the body would also have been recovered.

The Silchester handle represents the fourth such jug known from Britain, the others being complete. A slender example of the western type is one of three jugs found at Hauxton Mill, Cambs. (Hurrell 1904, 496, pl. 23, b; Liversidge 1958, 11; Eggers 1966, Abb. 39, c). Its terminal shows a pair of naked feet peeping out from beneath rudimentary drapery, a feature that derives from an earlier Graeco-Roman tradition. The circumstances of the find are unfortunately obscure; the jugs may be from a hoard or grave deposit, or, like the Tongeren find, a combination of both. One of the other jugs has a trefoil mouth, a first-century form that supports the late first-century A.D. date for the appearance of foot-handle jugs proposed by Szabó, but there is unfortunately no guarantee that all three vessels were directly associated when buried. Hauxton lies on the river

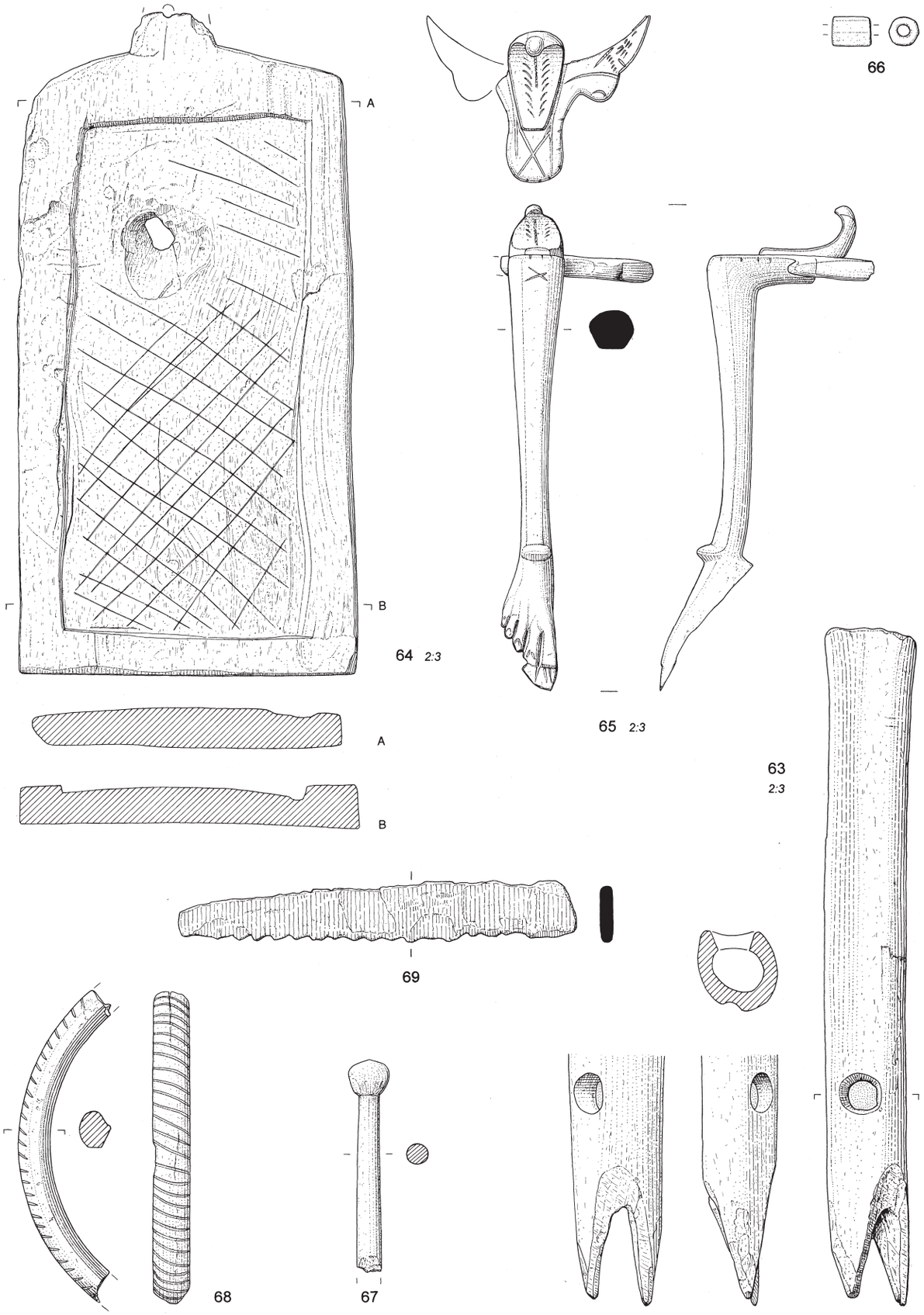

FIG. 60. Small finds: Period 4 south-eastern pits (2) (Object 500017). Scale 1:1 except Nos 63–5 (2:3). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

Granta, a location that enhances the possibility that this jug matches the watery associations noted in many of the other western finds. A second western-type jug, also showing a pair of feet, was found at Corbridge in a probable dark earth layer within the eastern military compound just south of the Stanegate (Site 43; Forster and Knowles 1913, 7). Three temples lay on the other side of the compound wall, and a bone plaque carved with the image of a Mother Goddess bearing a mound or basket of fruit in her lap was found near the jug (ibid., 234, 275–6, fig. 22). The compound wall appears to deny any association between the jug and plaque and one or other of the three temples, but their proximity is tantalising; perhaps the objects were tossed over the wall during a clearance or demolition project? The third complete jug is of the ovoid-bodied eastern form. It was found at Heybridge, Essex, in a small pit on a plot of land fronting the approach road to the site's temple precinct (Crummy 2006c, 6), so, as with the Corbridge jug, its association with a temple is close but not direct. The terminal on the Heybridge jug consists of only a right foot, the leaf at the top of the handle has been transformed into a lotus bud, with the calyx incorporating the angular terminals that are here at a considerable remove from the original bird's heads (ibid., fig. 2).

The wooden writing-tablet
By Jacqui Watson

A wooden writing-tablet (SF 4386) (FIGS 36 and 60, No. 64) was found in the basal fill (6436) of well 5735 (for the full conservation report, see Watson 2008). The context in which the tablet was found has been dated to *c.* A.D. 200 (above, pp. 43–4), which puts this example rather later than the more commonly recorded writing-tablets from the first and second centuries. The writing-tablet is made of maple (*Acer* sp.), not the expected silver fir, larch or cedar (see below), and the object seems to be roughly made from a single piece of wood, with little attempt made to produce a neat and symmetrical piece. On closer examination it was possible to see that fine lines have been cut into the surface which would have held the wax. Another piece of wood was attached to the front of the writing-tablet and was identified as being a piece of oak (*Quercus* sp.) and therefore not part of the broken handle as hoped.

Analysis

Attempts were made to see if any traces of wax might remain by examining the object under UV light and using Fourier Transform Infra-Red spectroscopy (FTIR). Unfortunately both techniques proved inconclusive. No traces of wax showed under UV light, but some waxes such as beeswax do not fluoresce. It was possible to produce a FTIR spectrum, but no definite match was found, so samples have been retained for further analysis when more comparative spectra are available.

Wax writing-tablets

Wax writing-tablets have been found on a number of sites in Britain, but most have come from Roman forts along Hadrian's Wall and are associated with the military occupation, and date to the first and second centuries. The woods used for these objects form a small group including silver fir, larch, and cedar, with a few examples of maple or sweet chestnut (see Table 12). Silver fir and larch are native to upland areas of southern Europe, while cedar was more common in the eastern Mediterranean territories of the Roman Empire (Hather 2000, 38–43; Gale and Cutler 2000, 375). Sweet chestnut is not a native tree to the British Isles, and is presumed to have been introduced by the Romans. Out of the five wood species recorded for wax writing-tablets only the examples made from maple could have come from local supplies of timber. Field maple has already been identified among the charcoal residues from Silchester (Smith 2002, 28), and would have been available in the local woodland.

The shape of this writing-tablet is also unusual and more detail was revealed when the object was completely dry and it was possible to remove the soil and concretions from the wood surface. The hole at one end was in fact a knot-hole where the knot in the original piece of timber had

TABLE 12. WOODS USED FOR WRITING-TABLETS FROM VARIOUS SITES IN ROMAN BRITAIN.

	Alder	Birch	Willow	Maple	Silver fir	Larch	Cedar	Sweet chestnut
Vindolanda, Hadrian's Wall[1]	▲	▲	▲			●		
Carlisle, Annetwell St.[2]	▲				●		●	
Carlisle, Millenium excs.[3]							●	
Corbridge. Hadrian's Wall [4]				■	●			●
London, St Thomas' St.[5]					●			
London, St Magnus House[6]					●		●	
Groundwell Ridge, Wilts[7]						●		
Silchester, Hants				■				

▲ ink writing-tablets made from native wood species
■ wax writing-tablets made from native wood species
● wax writing-tablets made from non-native wood

[1] Bowman and Thomas 1983; [2] Jones 1991; [3] Watson pers. comm.; [4] Watson 1987; [5] Keepax 1975; [6] Gale and Cutler 2000; [7] Fell *et al.* 2008

fallen out at some point, probably before burial. It also became clear that all the recessed area had been cut with fine cross-hatched lines, possibly to help key in the thin wax surface; they were not vestiges of writing or graffiti.

This object has probably been whittled out of a piece of wood with a knife, which has resulted in the block having uneven edges and an undulating surface. On the reverse one can see the shallow and slightly discoloured depressions as a result of trying to obtain a flat surface with a short bladed knife rather than using a much larger bladed draw-knife where it would have been possible to produce an even surface by removing one or two shavings of wood.

The handle is broken at the point where a hole has been made for suspension, leaving a dark coloured depression (FIG. 60, No. 64). However, no evidence remains to suggest how the writing-tablet was suspended in use.

Most of the wax writing-tablets that have been found on British sites conform not only to a small specific group of wood species but also to a fairly uniform size and shape; this example is different in many ways, appearing to be roughly made with materials and tools to hand. The majority also come from a different period of the Roman occupation in Britain, most having been dated to the first and second centuries, whereas this tablet comes from an early third-century context.

Unfortunately analytical work to identify traces of residual wax proved inconclusive, but samples of the silt have been retained to re-run at a later date if required.

Pit 2434 (Object 500031)

The latest of the south-east pits was backfilled in the late third century, a date supported by an unworn coin of Carausius (A.D. 287–293) (SF 01612) and the presence of three items typical of the later Roman period: a green glass hexagonal cylinder bead, a bone hairpin with globular head, and a shale armlet with incised grooves imitating cabling (FIG. 60, Nos 66–8, SFs 1826, 1755 and

1754). Hexagonal green glass beads, a cheap substitute for beryl, occur throughout the Roman period but occur more frequently in Britain in late Roman contexts, no doubt largely because the change in burial rite from cremation to inhumation allowed complete necklaces to survive (Guido 1979; Crummy 1983, 34; Riha 1990, type 11.23; Guido and Mills 1993; Bertrand 2003, 69–70). The hairpin is of the long-lived globular-headed Type 3, while the simply-achieved cable decoration on the armlet suits a date in the later third or early fourth century. The pit also contained a badly decayed sole, or pair of soles, from nailed leather footwear, preserved as 'casts' in a hard chalky deposit patchily stained yellow-green, almost certainly from cess. These features fragmented on lifting, but some of the hobnails survive intact and the pieces of leather that made up the composite sole are visible as distinct mineral-replaced layers in section. Also from pit 2434 is the blade of a small saw, one of the few craft tools in the 'City in Transition' assemblage (FIG. 60, No. 69, SF 1542). The thickened handle plate at the upper end would have been fitted with a composite organic handle. The small size of the blade is in contrast to the coarseness of the teeth, which at three teeth/cm mark this saw out as a woodworker's tool rather than a surgeon's (compare with the fourteen teeth/cm of the Stanway healer's saw (Jackson 2007, 250, fig. 121, CF47.28)).

PERIOD 4 SOUTH-EASTERN OCCUPATION (Object 700) (Appendix 2, Table 34)

As with Object 701, the material from the various levels comprising Object 700 is described in chronological sequence.

A curved pick from the path (FIG. 61, No. 70, SF 1939) is a comparatively rare object. There are other examples from London, Verulamium and Colchester (Wheeler 1930, pl. 38, 10; Waugh and Goodburn 1972, fig. 35, 76; Crummy 1983, fig. 66, 1939). They may have been used as toilet instruments, perhaps as toothpicks, as suggested by a superficial similarity to the larger types of nail-cleaner, but there is no firm evidence to support this identification.

From the make-ups for the northernmost building MRTB 5 in this area came a variety of metal fragments, among them part of a knife blade, two stylus fragments and a ring-headed pin, together with a complete iron needle with a long oval eye (FIG. 61, No. 71, SF 1997) and an acorn-shaped weight of lead with copper-alloy sheet cladding the surface (FIG. 61, No. 72, SF 1905). Traces of iron on the weight come from the suspension loop. Among the material from the northern building MRTB 5 was a split-spike loop and a damaged key, while the southern building MRTB 4 produced a well-worn hone (FIG. 61, No. 73, SF 2538), an early Roman hairpin, an iron ferrule, a fragmentary copper-alloy wire armlet and two roughly-shaped pottery counters.

The ?occupation contexts contained another wire armlet or anklet, in this case made of iron, and a variety of other personalia, such as a small ear-scoop (FIG. 61, No. 74, SF 2356), a copper-alloy hairpin of Group 3A (Cool 1990, 154), bone hairpins of Types 1 and 2 (Crummy 1983, 20–1) and a Type 2 variant (FIG. 61, No. 75, SF 2497), a fragment of a simple iron one-piece brooch (FIG. 61, No. 76, SF 2532), and an enamelled umbonate brooch of copper alloy (FIG. 61, No. 77, SF 2521). While the ?armlet may be contemporary with its context, the remaining dress accessories date to the first to second century, with the iron brooch fragment perhaps as early as the first century B.C. The undated objects from this group of contexts include a small fragment from a shale vessel and a wide variety of iron fittings: a joiner's dog, a clamp or piece of binding, a ring or collar, a rove, and part of a strap-hinge. Also present was a complete linch-pin of an unusual form, with a rectangular, rather than crescentic or spatulate, head (FIG. 61, No. 78, SF 2288; see Manning 1985, 72–4, for the commoner forms).

The make-up for the late Roman buildings in this part of the site produced a large collection of objects, many of iron and nearly all fragmentary, such as two hipposandal wings, two keys with missing teeth, parts of two knife blades, some hobnails, and a number of strips and pieces of sheet that probably derived from structural fittings and furniture; a complete stylus with twisted stem is an exception (FIG. 61, No. 79, SF 2058; Manning 1985, 85, Type 4). Non-ferrous pieces include part of an early Roman bone hairpin with lattice-decorated head (FIG. 61, No. 80, SF 1592), a complete nail-cleaner with long plain shaft (FIG. 61, No. 81, SF 1775), a decorative

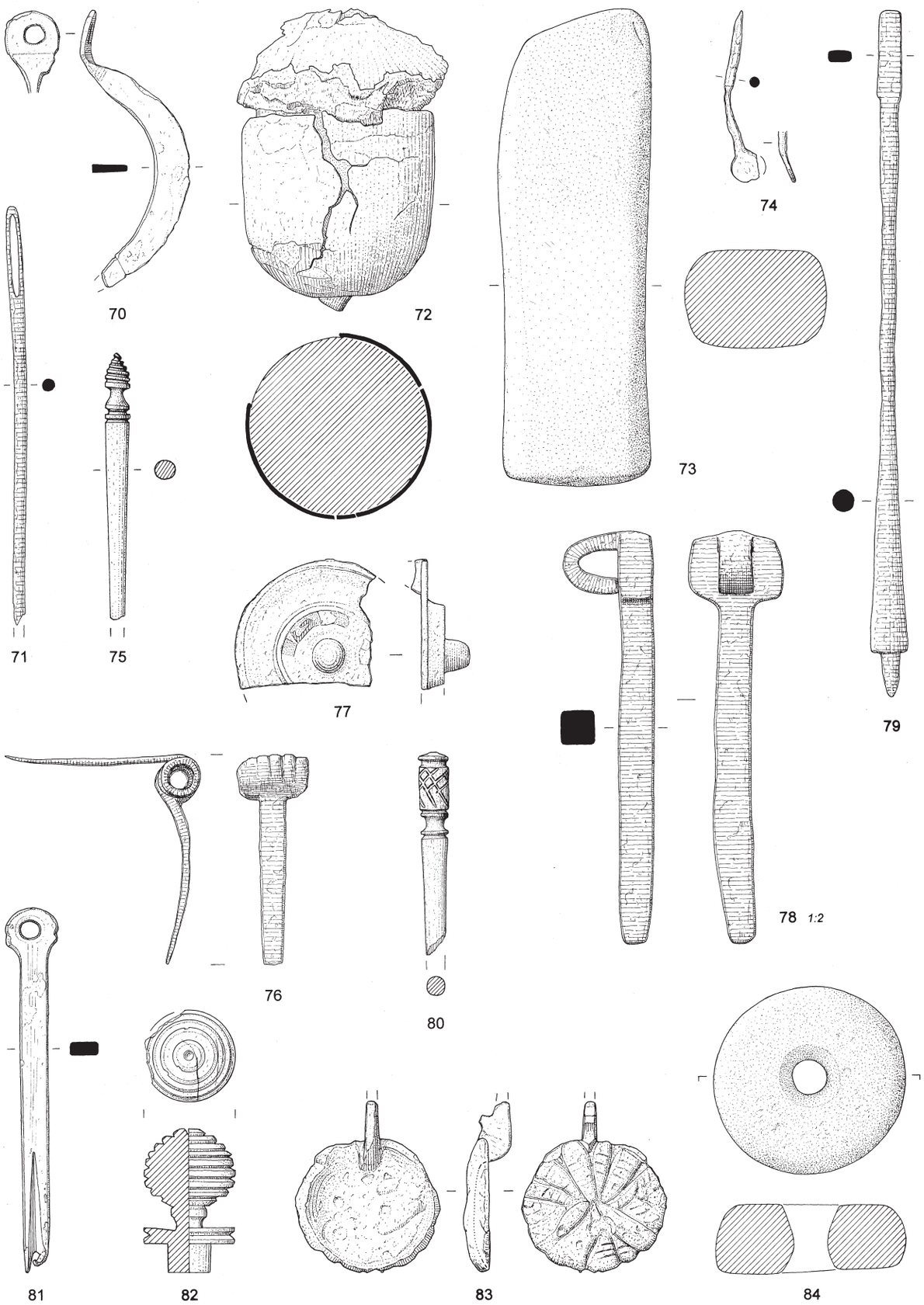

FIG. 61. Small finds: Period 4 south-eastern occupation (Object 700). Scale 1:1 except No. 78 (1:2). (*Drawn by Brian Williams*)

ivory peg that may have come from the lid of a *pyxis* (FIG. 61, No. 82, SF 2010), a spoon bowl with decorative mouldings on the underside (FIG. 61, No. 83, SF 2224), and two spindlewhorls, one made from a reused pottery sherd, the other stone (FIG. 61, No. 84, SF 2810). Two small fragments of bar iron from the make-up derive from blacksmithing, but in this secondary context such a low number of pieces can be presumed to have travelled some distance from their initial point of disposal, as is the case with the majority of the material from the Period 4 occupation, and with that from so many of the other contexts in this assemblage.

DISCUSSION

Table 13 summarises the functional categories present in the Objects associated with Periods 3 and 4. The northern and southern buildings (MRTB 4 and 5) in Object 700 and the possible building (MRTB 3) in Object 701 have been listed separately in order to highlight their contents. The categories are those defined in Crummy 1983: Category 1, dress accessories; 2, toilet instruments; 3, textile manufacture and working; 4, household equipment; 5, recreation; 6, weighing and measuring; 7, literacy; 8, transport; 10, tools; 11, general fittings and fasteners; 12, horticulture/agriculture/animal husbandry; 13, military equipment; 15, metal-working; 16, bone-working (and here also leather-working); and 18, miscellaneous. No objects were present from Categories 9 (buildings and services, dealt with elsewhere in this volume), 17 (objects associated with the manufacture of pottery and other ceramic objects) and 14 (religion), although religious/ritual activity is evidenced by the contextual use and condition of some artefacts and will be summarised below. Items only doubtfully attributed to a category are not distinguished in Table 13 from items that are positively identified. Iron nails and slags do not form part of this chapter (Tootell, below, Ch. 11), but an unfinished copper-alloy casting, some possible copper-alloy casting waste and some offcuts from blacksmith's bar iron are included here. We should also note that querns and whetstones (household equipment) are catalogued and discussed by Hayward (below, Ch. 9).

As with the late Roman assemblage from Insula IX, the categories best represented are 1 (dress accessories), 11 (fittings) and 18 (miscellaneous), and this is a pattern that occurs on most Roman sites. The remaining categories vary from being represented by only one artefact to a substantial number of artefacts, and it can be from these groups that the character of a site emerges, such as when a high proportion of tools, craft waste, military equipment, or religious regalia points to a specific activity. On an urban site such as Insula IX an individual character only rarely emerges, blurred by earlier residual material, truncation or disturbance of surfaces, the importation of dump and make-up soils, and above all the general wide range of activities that would have taken place in and around the insula over the course of many decades or centuries. Nevertheless, individual finds or small groups of finds within a category may offer glimpses of the economic and intellectual status of the inhabitants, particularly as regards Romanization, ritual practices, literacy and access to imported goods.

The many items in Category 18 consist not only of unidentified or general pieces (such as multi-purpose rings and pieces of wire), but also of small fragments of scrap metal and bone shafts from pins, needles, or spoons. This is probably indicative of material derived from soil that has been turned over or moved, such as midden waste or make-up. The concentration of miscellaneous items outside the Period 3–4 buildings, and particularly in the south-eastern part of the site in Objects 500017, 700 and 701, which include rubbish disposal pits and layers of levelling material, make-up and dump, confirms this interpretation (FIG. 62; Table 13). This distribution pattern is repeated for many of the other functional categories, stressing the secondary nature of the contexts from which much of this assemblage derives. The fittings of Category 11 show a fairly even spread in Period 3, shifting in Period 4 to a bias to the south-eastern area, but in both periods a number of items are associated with the buildings (FIG. 63). As fittings range from copper-alloy studs and nails to iron objects such as keys or hinges, the category is perhaps too broad to allow for close interpretation, and many of the objects are in secondary contexts such as make-up or other imported material, but in some instances a direct connection with a building or its contents may be reasonably assumed, such as the iron latchlifter from MB 3 (Object 50046).

TABLE 13. SUMMARY OF FUNCTIONAL CATEGORIES REPRESENTED IN EACH OBJECT
(For categories, see p. 120)

	Category														
Object	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11	12	13	15	16	18
50037	9	5	1	3	3	-	1	1	2	11	-	-	-	-	25
50018	9	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	2	-	12
50019	6	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	6
50046	19	2	2	6	5	-	2	1	1	12	1	-	-	-	23
500017/pit 3406	15	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	4	3	-	-	-	-	16
500017/pit 3102	11	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	15
500017/pit 5693	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	3
500017/well 5735	4	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	4
500017/well 1750	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
500017/pit 2434	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
500017/pit 2601	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
500017/pit 5039	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
500017/pit 6290	3	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
50029/pit 4835	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
50029/well 2234	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
701, general	20	7	2	10	7	-	2	1	4	16	2	1	7	-	64
701, ?building	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
700, general	18	3	3	4	1	1	5	3	3	23	-	-	3	-	44
700, northern building	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	4
700, southern building	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	-	2
Totals	122	22	12	33	25	1	12	8	19	90	4	1	13	2	233

The dress accessories of Category 1 largely conform to this bias to the south-eastern part of the site, although hobnails are concentrated in Period 4 and in only a limited number of contexts, and there is a markedly different concentration of hairpins in a different area in the same period (FIG. 64; Table 13). This might be taken as indicative of different methods of disposal for different items, but is more likely to be the result of different context types deposited at different times. Brooches are more generally scattered across the site, including in the footprints of the Period 3–4 buildings, but most are again likely to be secondary in these contexts as many predate Period 3 (FIG. 64). For example, a second-century enamelled umbonate brooch (FIG. 61, No. 77, SF 2521) was found in Object 700 in association with other early dress accessories and like them was residual (Table 34, Appendix 2).

The brooch assemblage is dominated by copper-alloy Nauheim derivatives of the type that arrived in Britain at the Conquest and continued in use until *c.* A.D. 80/5 (*pace* Corney 2000, 337). Nauheim derivatives are present in Objects 50037, 50018, 50019, 50046 and 701, but are noticeably absent from the pit groups, Objects 500017 and 500029, and from Object 700. Other first-century brooch types also occur in many of these Objects, some pre-Conquest (Colchester,

FIG. 62. Distributions of miscellaneous small finds in Periods 3 (upper) and 4 (lower) (Category 18).

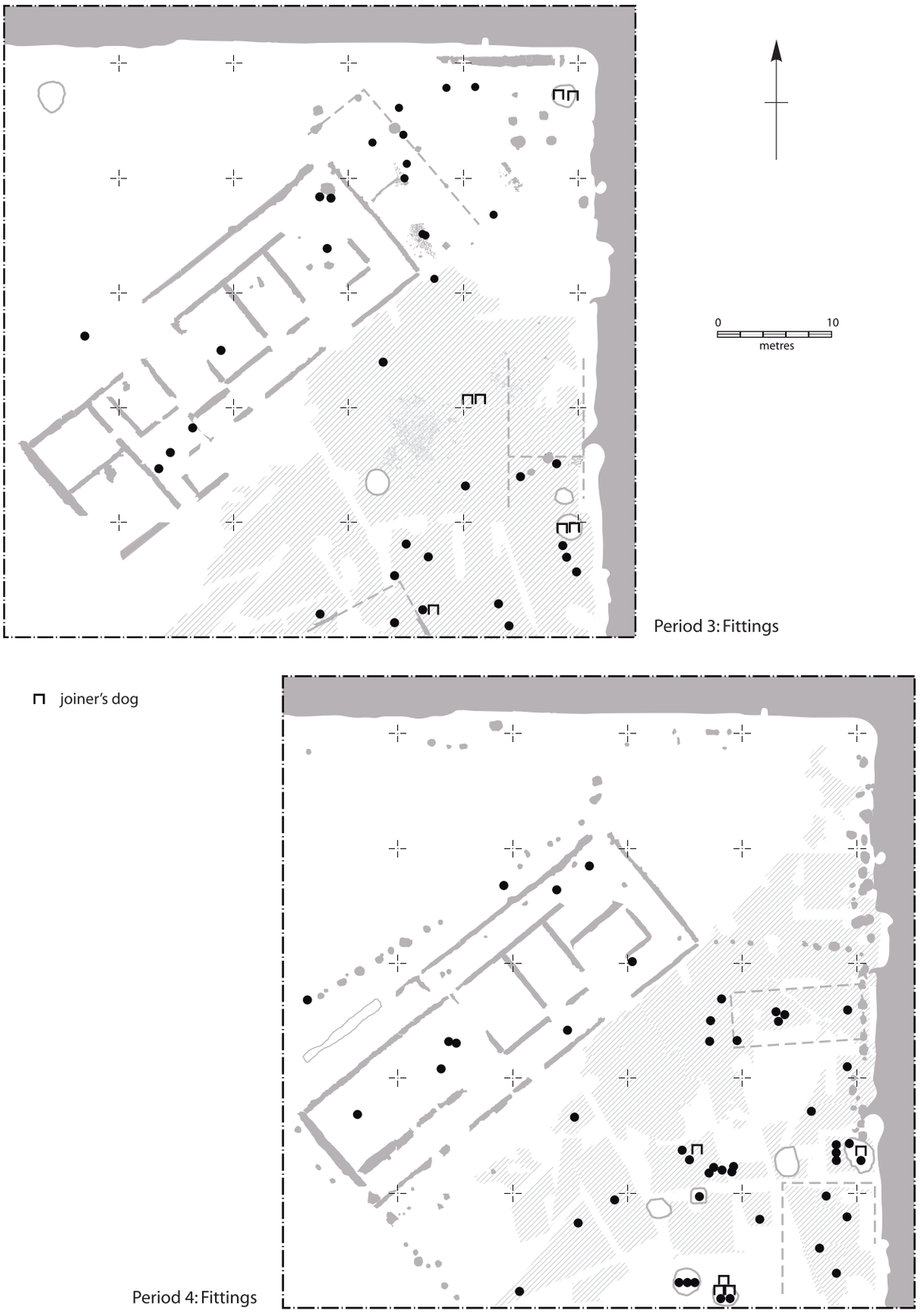

FIG. 63. Distributions of fittings in Periods 3 (upper) and 4 (lower) (Category 11).

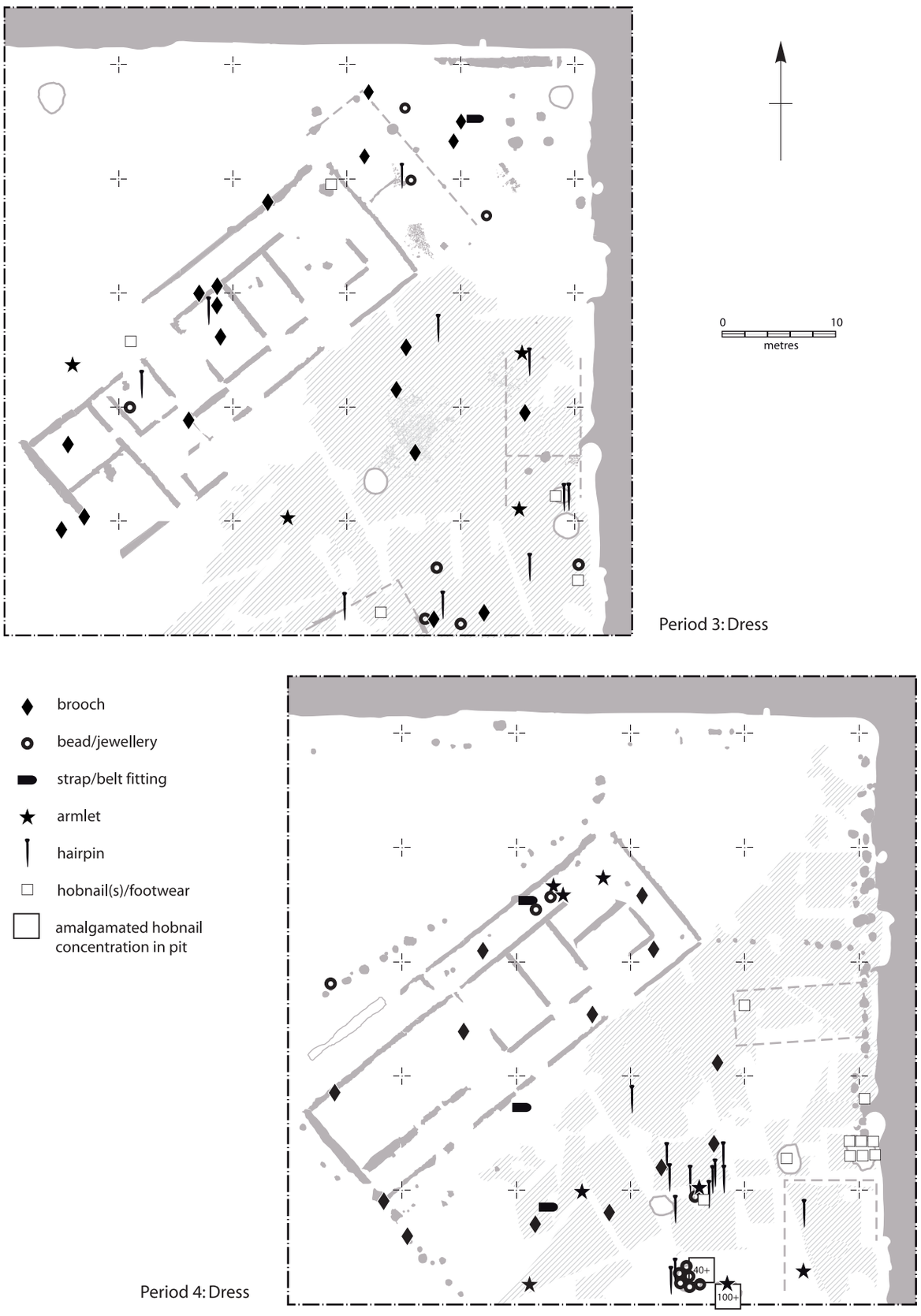

FIG. 64. Distributions of dress accessories in Periods 3 (upper) and 4 (lower) (Category 1).

Langton Down) and some post-Conquest (Hod Hill, Colchester B and BB derivatives). The dating of these forms in Britain is sufficiently well-established to define them as certainly residual in mid to late second- and third-century contexts. The presence of these early brooches in the features and layers associated with the Period 3–4 buildings can therefore be presumed to be the result of the movement of soil about the area in the course of building works or the manuring of cultivated areas with well-rotted midden waste. In some cases, particularly in the deposits pre-dating MB 1 (Object 50018), first-century brooches might have been used as foundation deposits, or perhaps termination deposits for earlier buildings. Another possible explanation for the presence of some early brooches in later contexts is that they are debris cleared from a nearby temple or shrine, as may also be the case with other items (see below).

The absence of early brooch types from the pit groups points to their no longer being available for disposal in the second and third centuries, and in the case of Object 700 it seems that the soils being utilised no longer contained first-century material. This observation impacts not only upon the date of the other small finds in these various Objects, but most particularly upon the period of manufacture of the forms of early Roman bone hairpins in the pits and in Object 700. Simple tapering-shafted conical-headed Type 1 and 2 hairpins date from the mid-first century into the second century, but it has not been firmly established how long into the second century they were used, and how much they overlapped with the later swollen-shafted globular-headed Type 3, which appeared at the earliest *c.* A.D. 150 and continued to be used into the late fourth century (Crummy 1983, 20–3; 1992, 144). Only two Type 3 hairpins have been found in the 'City in Transition' assemblage (FIG. 59, No. 57, SF 2918 and FIG. 60, No. 67, SF 1755), respectively in pit 3406, backfilled in the early to mid-third century, and in pit 2434, backfilled in the late third century. Pit 3406 also contained a Type 1 hairpin, suggesting that the early forms continued in use until at least *c.* A.D. 200/225, giving a broad 50/75-year period for the straight-sided forms to fall into disuse and the swollen-shafted forms to be established as the norm. In practice the change is likely to have been swifter and perhaps centred upon *c.* A.D. 200.

Unlike the small finds associated with the masonry buildings, the assemblage from the timber building (MRTB 1/ERTB 1 = Object 50037) contains several objects that are likely to be closely associated with its occupation. They include three brooches dating to the late first to second century: two T-shaped brooches, one with Polden Hill spring mechanism, (FIG. 54, Nos 1–2, SFs 2985 and 3256) and a penannular brooch (FIG. 54, No. 6, SF 2877). All three, together with a hairpin of Cool's Group 6 (FIG. 54, No. 5, SF 2860), would suit a late Flavian/Trajanic/Hadrianic date, and to them can be added a crude lead candelabrum that dates at the earliest to the Antonine period. While acknowledging the presence of residual first-century material in Object 50037, this particular combination of artefacts could therefore be defined as late Hadrianic/early Antonine, a date that agrees with that of the early occupation of the building.

Rites of foundation seem to have been behind the deposition of two complete toilet sets in MB 2 (=Object 50019), one from a floor and the other from a wall, and this enhances the presumption that the brooches mentioned above, and also a complete toilet set from MRTB 1/ERTB 1 (=Object 50037), were also used in this way. In early Roman London complete toilet sets show a marked concentration on the Middle Walbrook valley, where, along with a mass of other metalwork, they were used as votive deposits associated with the Walbrook stream (Crummy with Pohl 2008, 18–19). The various Object tables (Appendix 2) and FIG. 65 show that all three of the complete toilet sets on Insula IX are associated with buildings, while most of the individual instruments and other grooming equipment, such as mirrors, stirring rods, and long-handled toilet spoons, are more widely scattered. This is not to say that single toilet instruments were not also used as votives, and some of the tweezers and nail-cleaners from other parts of the site may have been used in this way, particularly if there had been a shrine or temple close to Insula IX, as has been suggested above. Some sanctuary sites, such as Woodeaton in Oxfordshire, Harlow in Essex and the shrine of Apollo at Nettleton, Wiltshire, have produced high proportions of individual toilet instruments, especially nail-cleaners, which have been shown to be a peculiarly Romano-British survival from the La Tène period. The influence of Roman grooming practices seems to have driven nail-cleaners out of use in Gaul and Germany during the Augustan period, whereas the conquest of Britain produced an upsurge in production and a wider percolation

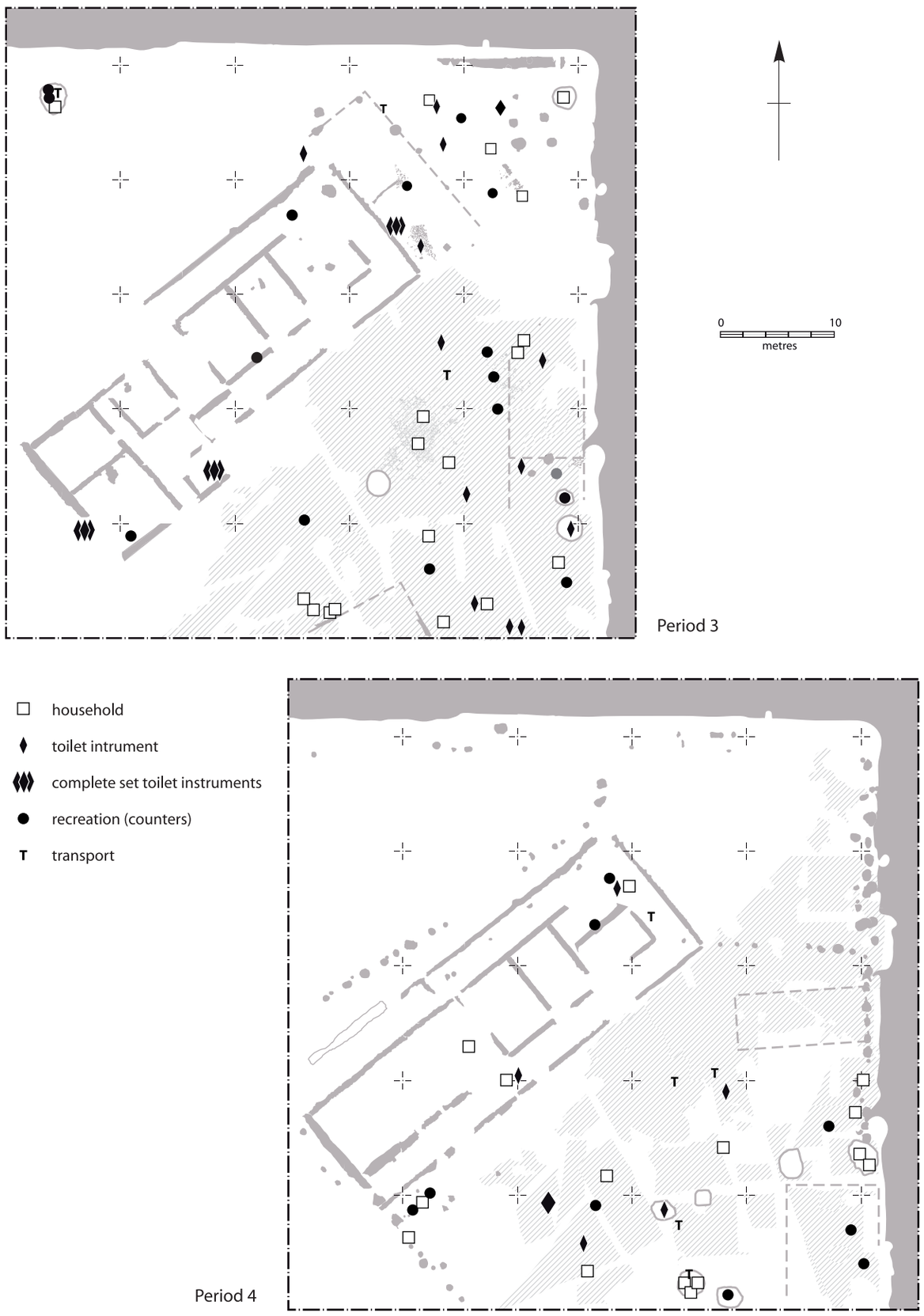

FIG. 65. Distributions of toilet instruments, household items, and items relating to recreation and transport in Periods 3 (upper) and 4 (lower) (Categories 2, 4, 5 and 8).

of their use throughout a wider section of society, particularly in southern and central Britain. The proportion of nail-cleaners is higher from small settlements and rural sites than from major towns, and their use as votives, whether individually or as part of a set, was probably driven by their close association with the person and their wider availability for both use and ritual deposition, although they may also have held a deeper resonance for an early Romano-Briton than these considerations imply (Eckardt and Crummy 2008, 69–72, 96–7, 103–4).

In general the contexts associated with the timber building produced objects from a broad range of functional categories, and those associated with the masonry buildings are similar in character (Table 13). Even though a high proportion of items in these Object assemblages are residual, they represent a typical cross-section of the material likely to be found in an average Romano-British urban setting. As well as the dress accessories in Category 1, other small personalia from Categories 2 and 5 are present, together with domestic items from Category 4 and fittings from Category 11 (FIG. 65). Household equipment in the assemblage is largely represented by bone spoons and shale vessels; notable exceptions are a fragment of a bucket handle and the handle from a jug, both from well 5735, although the latter probably had a religious function. The jug handle is discussed in detail above, and, as well as perhaps being from a vessel used in ritual activity, its final use may well have been as an *ex voto*. The bone spoons from Insula IX can be equated to some extent with the early Roman hairpins. They were early imports to the province, no doubt arriving as personal equipment with soldiers and immigrant civilians and rapidly being adopted by the wider Romano-British population. There is evidence for their manufacture and for that of Type 1 and 2 hairpins at Winchester and at Woodcuts Common on Cranborne Chase, Dorset (Crummy 2001, 97–9; Rees *et al.* 2008, 182–94). How long they remained in use is not clear. Although present in second-century assemblages, they are certainly absent from those of the fourth century (ibid.). Whether or not they were used in at least the early years of the third century is uncertain. Seven are listed in the 'City in Transition' catalogue: one from MRTB 1/ ERTB 1 (=Object 50037), the Period 3 timber buildings, and six from Object 701. Of the latter, three came from general contexts within this Object, and a remarkable three from the possible building MRTB 3 in this area. The idiosyncratic nature of the collection of items from the possible building MRTB 3 — principally made from bone and with a high proportion of spoons — provides the structure with a degree of 'authenticity', albeit somewhat diluted by the presence of the other three spoons from scattered contexts in the same Object. As this possible building cut the late second-century silts, it is likely that these spoons were being used up to *c.* A.D. 200 or into the first decade of so of the third century.

Evidence for recreation (Category 5) is present in some quantity, chiefly outside the footprints of the buildings but in some instances inside them (FIG. 65). All these items are counters of bone, glass, recycled pot sherds, and in one instance a piece of tile. Some of the ceramic pieces may have been used for other purposes, particularly the larger ones, but most of these counters would have been used for Roman-style board games such as *ludus latrunculorum* and *duodecim scripta* or for an early version of the Celtic game known in the British medieval sources as *fidhcheall* in Ireland and *gwyddbwyll* in Wales (Schädler 2007, 369–74). Items associated with transport (Category 8) are comparatively low in number and all relate to vehicles and driven animals: fragments of hipposandals, a terret and a linch pin (FIG. 65). None are necessarily related directly to the inhabitants of Insula IX, but they provide a glimpse of how important the movement of goods and people was to urban life.

Apart from a few items associated with spinning and sewing, which are arguably domestic crafts (Category 3), and also some possible bronze-working fragments (Category 15) from the floors of MB 1 (Object 50018), craft- and occupation-specific equipment is markedly absent from the buildings (Table 13; FIGS 66–67). As has already been shown by the dislocation between the dates of some objects and the period of use of the timber and masonry buildings, some of these items are in secondary contexts and need not relate directly to the occupations and the lives of the inhabitants of the insula, but not all rubbish will travel far from its point of origin and so others must.

A noticeable dearth of weighing and measuring equipment (Category 6), with only one large weight having been found in Period 4 (Object 700), suggests that little or no commercial activity

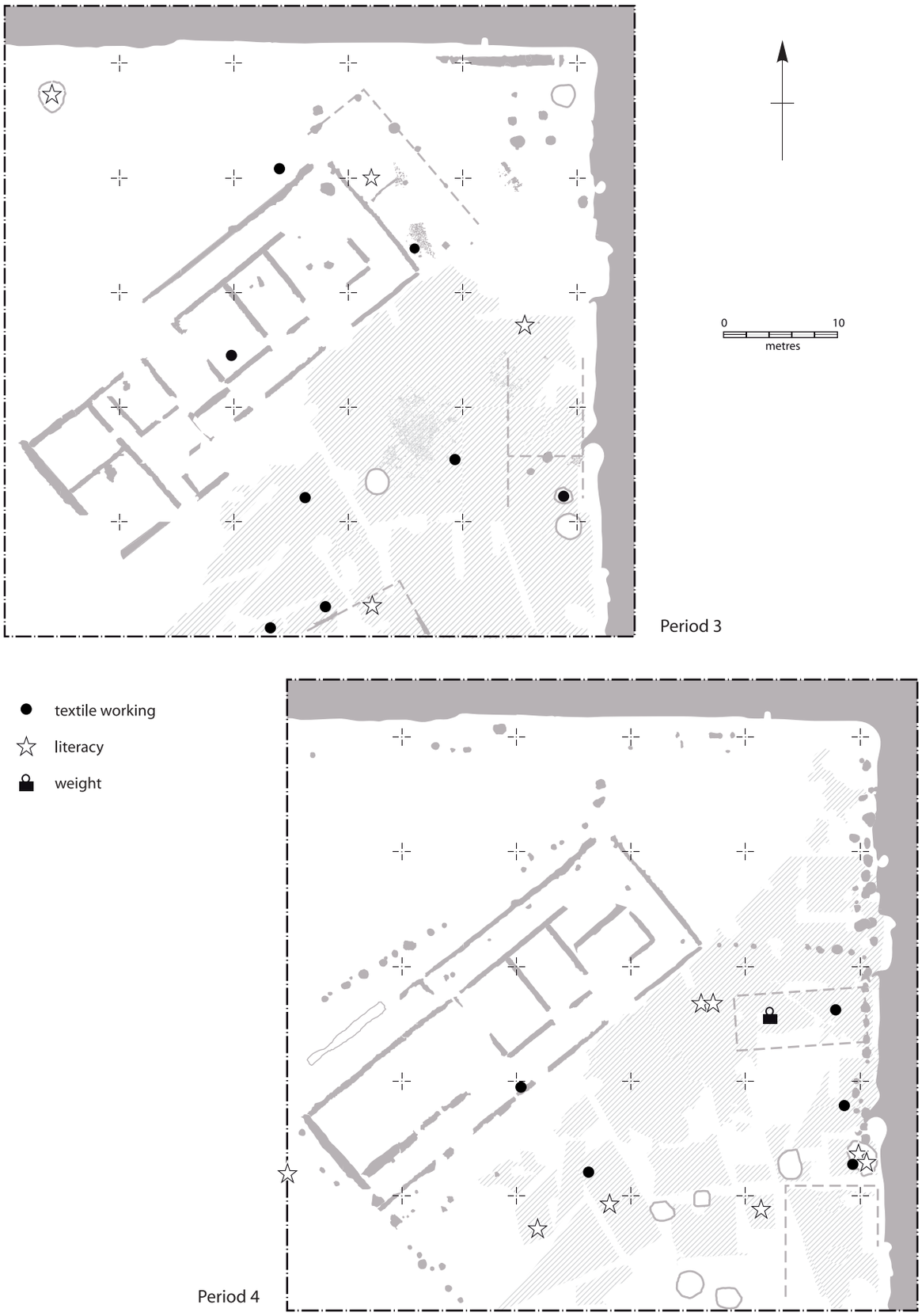

FIG. 66. Distributions of items relating to textile working, weighing and literacy in Periods 3 (upper) and 4 (lower) (Categories 3, 6 and 7).

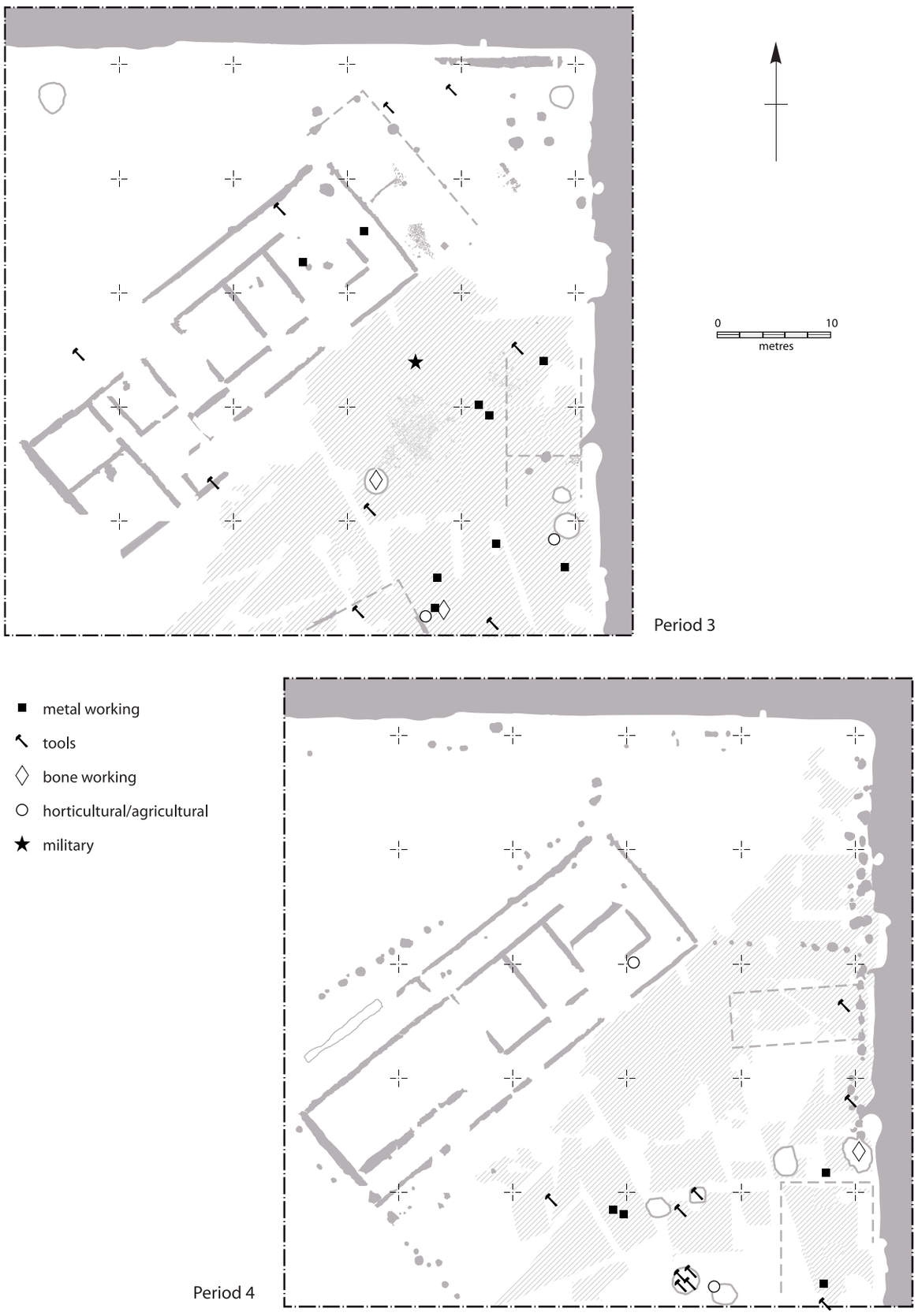

FIG. 67. Distributions of tools, horticultural/agricultural equipment and military equipment, and items relating to metal and bone-working in Periods 3 (upper) and 4 (lower) (Categories 10, 12, 13, 15 and 16).

took place on Insula IX (an observation that might correlate with the paucity of coins from Periods 3 and 4); it is also interesting to note that, while there are a few styli from the buildings (Category 7), the only substantial number also comes from Period 4 (Object 700), two of them from the same make-up context as the weight, and therefore secondary in that context and possibly derived from the same source beyond the insula itself (FIG. 66). There is also a writing-tablet from well 5735. In general the number of styli from Insula IX is fairly high. While this can in part be attributed to the generally good state of preservation of ironwork from the site, it also implies a considerably degree of literacy among the inhabitants of *Calleva*. The presence of styli but absence of seal-boxes from this part of the Insula IX assemblage is matched in the suburbs of Roman Winchester, and may relate both to the type of documents on which seal-boxes were used and the social context of their use (Rees *et al.* 2008, 138–9).

Only four items are associated with horticulture and animal husbandry (Category 12), two goad pricks and two rake prongs. One prick and one prong come from Object 700, the second prick from the construction clays for MB 3 Object 50046 and the second prong from the gravel capping of pit 3102 in Object 500034; only the latter may be in a primary context, although even this is doubtful (FIG. 67). While this provides very little indication that gardening and the keeping of animals took place on Insula IX, it can be linked to the broader picture presented by the objects associated with transport, the animal bone assemblage and the evidence for diet, particularly herbs and spices, demonstrated by the environmental assemblage. Goad pricks may alternatively relate to the possibility that there was a temple or shrine close to Insula IX, as five were found at the shrine of Apollo at Nettleton and one from the shrine of Nodens at Lydney, where they can be associated with driving animals to sacrifice (Wedlake 1982, 49; Wheeler and Wheeler 1932, 189).

Only one piece of military equipment was found, a first-century phalera that is clearly residual in its context (Category 13). That it was recovered from Object 701 is no doubt simply a reflection of the greater number of items from that Object than from any other (FIG. 67). It should be seen in the context of a small quantity of other pieces of early militaria recovered from contexts pre-dating Period 3, together with brooches with military associations, such as Aucissas, Hod Hills and also to some extent Nauheim derivatives, and also the similar material from earlier excavations (e.g. Corney 2000; Boon 2000).

Although there are no finds from Periods 3 and 4 on Insula IX that are specific to Category 14, which covers material with an overtly religious use, the beliefs of its inhabitants have nevertheless been touched on above with regard to rite of deposition. Probable ritual deposits from Period 3 include a mason's trowel in MB 2 (=Object 50019), two brooches and a knife in MB 1 (=Object 50018), a hairpin from MB 2 (=Object 50019), and the complete toilet sets from MB 2 (=Objects 50019) and MRTB 1/ERTB 1 (=50037). Another possible votive is the jug handle from the Period 4 well 5735. The clearest example of formal placement is undoubtedly the razor or knife with zoomorphic ivory handle from the Period 4 pit 2601. The handle clearly resonates with the importance of the dog in the religious life of Silchester (Fulford 2001, 201–2), and the animal's association with a wide range of deities, often those credited with healing or chthonic powers, provides deeper levels of complexity to the deposition of this object in its context. It also implies access to Continental markets in these high-quality items. High-status, continental-made objects do not figure large in the Insula IX Period 3 and Period 4 assemblage, being limited to this handle, a silver-in-glass bead and a fragment of a necklace of beryl and gold found in pit 3406, a decorative ivory peg that is probably all that remains of a *pyxis* from Object 700, and the jug handle from well 5735, all of Period 4. To these can be added a gold stud from Period 3 Object 701 which may be of British or continental origin. That these items existed in isolation is unlikely, especially given the presence of imported pottery on the site, and we can perhaps infer from them a greater degree of economic wealth within Insula IX in particular and mid-Roman Silchester in general than their number seems to imply.

It has been stated above, in the contexts of various groups of finds, that there may have been a temple or shrine adjacent to Insula IX. In an urban context the teasing out of votive from domestic is not necessarily straightforward, witness the literature regarding the Middle Walbrook assemblage (e.g. Merrifield 1965, 93; 1987, 26–7; 1995; Wilmott 1991; Maloney 1991), and

Insula IX is no exception. This is a gradually emerging picture that will be more fully explored at a later date, but it is informed by the presence of such artefact types as goad pricks, a high number of toilet instruments and other personalia, including deliberately bent, broken or rolled dress accessories. A number of items that directly reference health and good fortune are also present in the wider assemblage.

Metal-working (Category 15) is comparatively well-represented here, although not in any great quantity and scattered across the site and across the periods (FIG. 67). It is more fully dealt with elsewhere in this volume (Cook, above, Ch. 3; J.R.L. Allen and Tootell, below, Ch. 11). Again, the high number from Period 3 Object 701 reflects the greater quantity of material in general from that context group. Some of the items recovered are offcuts of bar iron from blacksmithing, while copper alloy working is represented both by casting waste and by an unfinished hinge, the latter also providing evidence for the manufacture of high-quality wooden objects at Silchester, although not necessarily on Insula IX. Category 10 covers general tools, which are similarly scarce (FIG. 67) and none are craft-specific, although the possibility that the zoomorphic razor or knife handle was used in the skinning of dogs raises new questions regarding this class of artefact (pp. 110–13). Two crude bone tools from Period 4 pit 3406 are likely to have been made locally. Although their precise functions are unclear, they are evidence for craft activity in Insula IX, possibly leather-working, which is supported by the recovery of two leather offcuts from Period 4 well 5735. Bone-working is represented by a single fragment, probably an unfinished hairpin, from Period 3 pit 5039 (Category 16). Evidence for bone-working as an intensive craft activity should consist of mixed dumps of discarded offcuts and unfinished or blundered items at various stages of manufacture, sometimes together with the processed but unused raw material, and this is not present here (Crummy 2001, 100; Rees *et al.* 2008, 182–94). This single piece points rather to *ad hoc* manufacture, which is already attested by the two crude tools from pit 3406. Home production of bone and antler objects seems to have taken place occasionally throughout the Roman period, perhaps because the standard products of specialist bone-workers were not always available (Crummy 2001, 102).

As far as the material from the northern and south-eastern pits and wells is concerned, these features contain material from a wide range of functional categories but this is clearly not because a greater number of artefacts was recovered from these contexts, as is the case in Objects 700 and 701. Some of the material may well have been scraped up from surrounding topsoil when the features were backfilled, but in general the artefacts seem to represent a true sample of contemporary detritus. An intriguing characteristic from some of the features is the recovery of joiner's dogs in several pits or wells, suggesting that they derive from superstructures or coverings that were broken up and buried as each open hole was backfilled (FIG. 63). Little organic material was recovered and most of the leather scraps that were found probably come from shoes or sandals, also represented by considerable quantities of hobnails (FIG. 64). The writing-tablet from Period 4 well 5735 is unusual both in form and in manufacture from maplewood rather than an imported softwood; it is probably a local product (above, pp. 116–17).

In terms of date, it had been hoped that Periods 3 and 4 at Silchester might present a clear difference between them as far as artefact type was concerned or at least allow the definition of a mid-Roman assemblage that was characterised by the presence of certain types of artefact rather than the absence of earlier and later material. That little progress in either respect has been made is no doubt partly due to the broad date ranges attributed to many artefact types as well as to the high level of residuality. Many objects are residual first-century pieces in second–century contexts, and there is some likelihood that many pieces in third-century contexts are similarly residual from the second century. The items that can be dated to the third century (or later) with reasonable certainty are few in number and come from Period 4 Objects 50046 and 700 and pits 3406 and 3102 in Object 500017. There are also a couple of 'late' finds in Period 3 Object 701. More broadly 'late' material is also present, in some cases later than the date range for Period 4 might easily accommodate. A copper-alloy needle in Object 50046 is the only distinctively late third-century and later object from the Period 4 masonry building. Two fourth-century armlet fragments also came from Object 50046, but from contexts post-dating the abandonment and demolition of the building rather than its occupation. Period 4 pit 3406 contained a bone peg,

a jet bead and a silver-in-glass bead, all late Roman artefact-types (although in the case of the silver-in-glass bead not confined to that period), and other bone pegs came from Period 4 pit 3102 and Object 700. These tapering straight-sided pegs may be hairpins, but they appear at a time when other hairpins have swollen shanks and so almost certainly have an alternative function (Crummy 1983, 162–3). Period 4 pit 2434 contained a bead, a Type 3 hairpin and an armlet that are typical of third to fourth-century assemblages, although in the case of the bead and armlet an earlier date cannot be ruled out. Finally, fragments of wire armlets/anklets that are also typical of the third and fourth centuries came from both Objects 700 and 701, and a plano-convex bone counter from Object 701 is a late Roman form.

In summary, the 'City in Transition' small finds are, in terms of function, typical of most Romano-British urban assemblages, with little to point to either a high-status population or craft activity, although there is evidence for literacy, leisure and of some contact with continental markets. Few items can be closely dated, and those that can are often residual in secondary contexts. Exceptions are often formal deposits of objects associated with rites of foundation or termination. Poised at the transition between early and late, the Insula IX small finds assemblage in Periods 3–4 prefigures the late settlement and also retains the long shadow of the early Roman town, even of the oppidum and a post-Conquest military presence. There can be no doubt that the population retained contact with the wider material culture of post-Conquest Roman Britain, as shown by the presence of western T-shaped brooches and nail-cleaners, while embracing a fully Romanised style of living.